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## THE SERAPHIM

AND

OTHER POEMS.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.

# THE SERAPHIM,

AND

## OTHER POEMS.

BY

#### ELIZABETH B. BARRETT,

AUTHOR OF

A TRANSLATION OF THE " PROMETHEUS BOUND," &c.

Some to sing, and some to say, Some to weep, and some to praye. SKELTON.

LONDON: SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET. 1838.



### PREFACE.

It is natural for every writer who has not published frequently, to revert, at least in thought, to his last work, in risking the publication of a new one. To me, this is most natural; the subject of the principal poem in the present collection having suggested itself to me, though very faintly and imperfectly, when I was engaged upon my translation of the "Prometheus Bound" of Æschylus.

I thought, that, had Æschylus lived after the incarnation and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ, he might have turned, if not in moral and intellectual yet in poetic faith, from the solitude of Caucasus to the deeper desertness of that crowded Jerusalem where none had any pity; from the "faded white flower" of the Titanic brow, to the "withered grass" of a Heart trampled on by its own beloved; from the glorying of him who gloried that he could not die, to the sublimer meekness of the Taster of death for every man; from the taunt stung into being by the torment, to HIS more awful silence, when the agony stood dumb before the love! And I thought, how, "from the height of this great argument," the scenery of the Prometheus would have dwarfed itself even in the eyes of its poet,how the fissures of his rocks and the innumerous smiles of his ocean would have closed and waned into blankness, - and his demigod stood confest, so human a conception as to fall below the aspiration of his own humanity. He would have turned from such to the rent rocks and darkened sun - rent and darkened by a

sympathy thrilling through nature but leaving man's heart untouched—to the multitudes, whose victim was their Saviour—to the Victim, whose sustaining thought beneath an unexampled agony, was not the Titanic 'I can revenge,' but the celestial 'I can forgive!'

The subjects of my two books lie side by side. The Prometheus of Æschylus is avowedly one of the very noblest of human imaginations; and when we measure it with the eternal Counsel, we know at once and for ever, how wide is the difference between man's ideal and God's divine!

The great tragic Soul, though untaught directly of Deity, brooded over His creation with exhaustless faculties, until it gave back to her a THOUGHT—vast, melancholy, beneficent, malign—the Titan on the rock, the reflected image of her own fallen immortality; re-

joicing in bounty, agonizing in wrong, and triumphant in revenge. This was all. "Then," said He, "Lo I come!" and we knew LOVE, in that He laid down His life for us. "By this we know love" \*- LOVE in its intense meaning. "The splendour in the grass and fragrance in the flower" are the splendour and fragrance of a love beyond them. "All thoughts, all passions, all delights," are "ministers" of a love around us. All citizenship, all brotherhood, all things for which men bless us, saving, 'Surely this is good,'- are manifestations of a love within us. All exaltations of our inward nature, in which we bless ourselves, saying, 'Surely this is great,'-are yearnings to a love above us. And thus, among the fragments of our fallen state, we may guess at LOVE even as Plato guessed at God: but by this, and this only, can we know it, - that Christ laid

<sup>\*</sup> Epis. John, i. 5. The modifying expression of God which appears in our version, is not in the Greek.

down His life for us. Has not LOVE a deeper mystery than wisdom, and a more ineffable lustre than power? I believe it has. I venture to believe those beautiful and often quoted words "God is love," to be even less an expression of condescension towards the finite, than an assertion of essential dignity in Him who is infinite.

But if my dream be true that Æschylus might have turned to the subject before us, in poetic instinct; and if in such a case — and here is no dream — its terror and its pathos would have shattered into weakness the strong Greek tongue, and caused the conscious chorus to tremble round the thymele,— how much more may I turn from it, in the instinct of incompetence! In a manner I have done so. I have worn no shoes upon this holy ground: I have stood there, but have not walked. I have drawn no copy of the statue of this Great Pan,— but have caught its shadow,— shortened in the dawn

of my imperfect knowledge, and distorted and broken by the unevenness of our earthly ground. I have written no work, but a suggestion. Nor has even so little been attempted, without as deep a consciousness of weakness as the severest critic and the humblest Christian could desire to impress upon me. I have felt in the midst of my own thoughts upon my own theme, like Homer's 'children in a battle.'

The agents in this poem of imperfect form — a dramatic lyric, rather than a lyrical drama—are those mystic beings who are designated in Scripture the Seraphim. The subject has thus assumed a character of exaggerated difficulty, the full sense of which I have tried to express in my Epilogue. But my desire was, to gather some vision of the supreme spectacle under a less usual aspect, — to glance at it, as dilated in seraphic eyes, and darkened and deepened by the near association with

blessedness and Heaven. Are we not too apt to measure the depth of the Saviour's humiliation from the common estate of man, instead of from His own peculiar and primæval one? To avoid which error, I have endeavoured to count some steps of the ladder at Bethel,—a very few steps, and as seen between the clouds.

And thus I have endeavoured to mark in my two Seraphic personages, distinctly and predominantly, that shrinking from, and repugnance to, evil, which, in my weaker Seraph, is expressed by fear, and, in my stronger one, by a more complex passion; in order to contrast with such, the voluntary debasement of Him who became lower than the angels, and touched in His own sinless being, sin and sorrow and death. In my attempted production of such a contrast, I have been true to at least my own idea of angelic excellence, as well as to that of His perfection. For one holiness differs from

another holiness in glory. To recoil from evil, is according to the stature of an angel; to subdue it, is according to the infinitude of a God.

Of the poems which succeed 'The Seraphim,' two ballads have been published in the "New Monthly Magazine;" one, the 'Romance of the Ganges,' was written for the illustration of "Finden's Tableaux," edited by Miss Mitford; and a few miscellaneous verses have appeared in the "Athenæum."

Lest in any of these poems a dreaminess be observed upon, while a lawlessness is imputed to their writer, she is anxious to assure whatever reader may think it worth while to listen to her defence, that none of them were written with a lawless purpose. For instance, 'The Poet's Vow' was intended to enforce a truth — that the creature cannot be *isolated* from the creature; and the

Romaunt of Margret,' a corresponding one, that the creature cannot be sustained by the creature. And if, indeed, the faintest character of poetry be granted to these compositions, it must be granted to them besides, that they contain a certain verity. For there is no greater fiction, than that poetry is fiction. Poetry is essentially truthfulness; and the very incoherences of poetic dreaming are but the struggle and the strife to reach the True in the Unknown. "If you please to call it but a dream," says Cowley, "I shall not take it ill; because the father of poets tells us, even dreams, too, are from God."\*

It was subsequent to my writing the poem called "The Virgin Mary to the Child Jesus," that I read in a selection of religious poetry, made by Mr. James Mont-

<sup>• &</sup>quot;Discourse by way of vision, concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell."

gomery, a lyric of the sixteenth century upon the same subject,\* together with an observation of the editor, that no living poet would be daring enough to approach it. As it has here been approached and attempted by the "weak'st of many," I would prove by this explanation, that consciously to impugn an opinion of Mr. Montgomery's, and enter into rivalship with the bold simplicity of an ancient ballad, made no part of the daringness of which I confess myself guilty.

Nothing more is left to me to explain in relation to any particular poem of this collection. I need not defend them for being religious in their general character. The generation of such as held the doctrine of that critic who was not Longinus, and believed in the inadmissibilty of religion into poetry, may have seen the end of vanity.

<sup>•</sup> The coincidence consists merely of the choice of subject; the mode of treating it being wholly different.

That "contemplative piety, or the intercourse between God and the human soul, cannot be poetical," is true, if it be true that the human soul having such intercourse is parted from its humanity, or if it be true that poetry is not expressive of that humanity's most exalted state. The first supposition is contradicted by man's own experience, and the latter by the testimony of Him who knoweth what is in man. For otherwise, David's 'glory' would have awakened with no 'harp and lute;' and Isaiah's poetry of diction would have fallen in ashes from his lips, beneath the fire which cleansed them.

To any less reverent objection, I would not willingly reply. "An irreligious poet," said Burns, meaning an undevotional one, "is a monster." An irreligious poet, he might have said, is no poet at all. The gravitation of poetry is upwards. The poetic wing, if it move, ascends. What did even the heathen Greeks — Homer,

Sublimely, because Æschylus, Sophocles, Pindar? born poets, darkly, because born of Adam and unrenewed in Christ, their spirits wandered like the rushing chariots and winged horses, black and white, of their brother-poet Plato,\* through the universe of Deity, seeking if haply they might find HIM: and as that universe closed around the seekers, not with the transparency in which it flowed first from His hand, but opaquely, as double-dyed with the transgression of its sons,- they felt though they could not discern the God beyond, and used the gesture though ignorant of the language of worshipping. The blind eagle missed the sun, but soared towards its sphere. Shall the blind eagle soar - and the seeing eagle peck chaff? Surely it should be the gladness and the gratitude of such as are poets among us, that in turning towards the beautiful, they may behold the true face of God.

<sup>\*</sup> See his Phædrus.

The disparaging speeches of prefaces are not proverbial for their real humility. I remember smiling over a preface of Pomfret, which intimates that he might hope for readers, as even Quarles and Wither found them! He does not add in words,—perhaps he did in thought, 'Fortunati nimium!'

Without disparaging speeches, and yet with a selfdistrust amounting to emotion, I offer to the public, and for the first time in my own name, these poems, which were not written because there is a public, but because they were thought and felt, and, perhaps, under some of the constraint referred to by Wither himself — for he has readers!

' Those that only sip,
Or but even their fingers dip
In that sacred fount (poor elves!)
Of that brood will show themselves:
Yea, in hope to get them fame,
They will speake though to their shame."

May the omen be averted!

I assume no power of art, except that power of love towards it, which has remained with me from my child-hood until now. In the power of such a love, and in the event of my life being prolonged, I would fain hope to write hereafter better verses; but I never can feel more intensely than at this moment—nor can it be needful that any should—the sublime uses of poetry, and the solemn responsibilities of the poet.

LONDON, 1838.

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## THE SERAPHIM.

PART THE FIRST.

" I look for angels' songs, and hear Him cry."

Giles Fletcher.

### THE SERAPHIM.

#### PART THE FIRST.

It is the time of the Crucifixion: and the Father of the Crucified has directed towards earth the angels of His heaven, of whom all have departed except the two Seraphim Ador and Zerah.

The place is the outer side of the shut heavenly gate. There stand the Seraphim. Ador the Strong has unfurled the thunder-cloud of his wing; but Zerah the Bright One lingers still, now looking backward to his heavenly habitation, and now upward to his brother's face.

Ador.

O seraph, pause no more!

Beside this gate of heaven we stand alone.

Zerah. This gate of heaven!

Ador.

Our brother hosts are gone -

B 2

#### THE SERAPHIM.

4

Zerah. Are gone! the golden harps, as ne'er before,

Still burning from our claspëd motion
And tunëd breath of rapt devotion,
Lie without a touch or tone,
Or canopy of angel wing,
Upon the glass-sea shore!

Ador. Instead of sounding, glittering
In the shadow from the throne—
The shadow without form, that resteth on
The broad and crystal sea—
Awfuller than light derived,
And red with primal heats whereby all life hath lived.

Zerah. Our visible of God! our heaven! and we Go thus!

Ador. Thus, now, beloved! unpausingly.

Beneath us sinks the pomp angelical—
The roar of whose descent hath died
To a still sound, as thunder into rain!
Th' immeasurable space seems magnified
With that thick life; whereof we nought retain
In vision, save the pale and eddying fall
Of wings innumerous, brightly crossed
By lines of hair that hath not lost
The glitter of the God-smile shed
Last, on bowëd angel's head!
And gleamed between by hands that fling
Homages like upward rays,
From constant habitude of praise
And high instinct of worshipping.

Zerah. Rapidly they drop below us.

Pointed palm and wing and hair,
Indistinguishable, show us
Only pulses in the air

Throbbing with a fiery beat —
As if a new creation heard
(Late unhearing, still unseeing)
Some divine and plastic word;
And trembling at its proper being,
Did waken at our feet.

Ador. Zerah! stand not lingeringly:

His voice — the voice that thrills us so
As we our harpstrings — uttered Go,

Behold the Holy in his woe —

And all are gone, save thee and —

Zerah.

Thee !

Ador. I stood the nearest to the throne,

What time the voice said Go.

And whether I was shook

By the storm-pathos of the tone
Which swept thro' Heaven the alien name of woe;

Or that the subtle glory broke

Thro' my strong and shielding wings,

Bearing to my finite essence

Incapacious of their presence,

Infinite imaginings —

None knoweth save the Throned who spoke!

But I who years agone Stood upright while th' eternal Breath did move Shaping the words that lightened — "Let light

be "-

Nor trembled but with love;
Now fell down tremblingly,
My face upon the pavement floor,
Without the praise that evermore
In music gusheth there!
As if mine immortality
O'erpowered by God's eternal were!

Thou — wherefore dost thou wait?

Oh! gaze not backward, brother mine;

The deep love in thy mystic eyne

Deepening inward, till is made

A copy of the earth-love shade —

Oh! gaze not thro' the gate!

God filleth heaven with God's own solitude

Till all its pavements glow!

His Godhead being no more subdued

By itself, to glories low

Which seraphs can sustain,

What if thou in gazing so,

Should behold but only one

Attribute, the veil undone —

And that the one to which we press

Ay! His love!

How the deep ecstatic pain

Thy being's strength would capture!

Without a language for the rapture,

Nearest, for its gentleness -

Without a music strong to come
And set th' adoring free;
For ever, ever, wouldst thou be
Amid the general chorus dumb, —
God-stricken, in seraphic agony!——
Or, brother, what if on thine eyes
In vision bare should rise
The life-fount whence His hand did gather
With solitary force
Our immortalities!—
Straightway how thine own would wither,
Falter like a human breath, —
And shrink into a point like death,
By gazing on its source!

My words have mirrored dread!

Meekly hast thou bent thine head,

And o'er each droppëd lid, hast bowed

Another broader silver cloud,

B 5

A languid wing — as if the glory

Of the God-throne were before thee!

Yet not — not so,
O loving spirit and meek, dost thou fulfil
All motions of the one pre-eminent Will
Which stirreth unto will and act our natures
As human souls do stir the fleshly creatures!—

Not for obeisance, but obedience,

Give motion to thy wings! Depart from
hence—

The voice said 'Go.'

Zerah. Belovëd! I depart!

His will is as a spirit within my spirit;

A portion of the being I inherit —

His will is mine obedience! I resemble

A flame all undefiled the it tremble —

I go and tremble! Love me, O beloved!

O thou, who stronger art,

And standest ever near the Infinite,
Pale with excelling light!

Love me, beloved! me, more newly made,
More feeble, more afraid —

And let me hear with mine thy pinions moved,
As close and gentle as the loving are;

That love being near, heaven may not seem so
far!

Ador. I am near thee, and I love thee!

Were I loveless, from thee gone,

Love still is round, beneath, above thee —

God, the omnipresent One.

Spread the wing, and lift the brow —

Well-beloved! what fearest thou?

Zerah. I fear, I fear —

Ador. What

What fear?

12

Zerah.

The fear of earth.

Ador. Of earth, the God-create, the beautiful?

From whence the sweet sea-music hath its birth,

And vernal forests lift their leaves in tune
Beneath the gracious, water-leading moon?
Where every night, the stars do put away
Meekly its darkness dull,
And look their spirit-light into the clay?
Where every day, the kingly sun doth bless
More lovingly than kings,
And stir to such harmonious happiness
All leafed and reeded things,

It seems as if the joyous shout which burst
From angel lips to see him first,
Had left a silent echo in his ray?

Zerah. Of earth — the God-create — but God-accurst :

Where man is, and the thorn!
Where winds and waves have borne,
Where sun and star can roll,
No tune, no shining to the human soul!
Where Eden's lapsing rivers all are dry,
And in their stead, do flow perpetually,
Do flow and flow hot streams of human tears—
Where Eden's tree of life no more uprears
Its spiral leaves and fruit; but in its stead
The cypress bows its melancholy head,
And all the undergrasses kills and seres!

Ador. Of earth, the very weak?

Where men that faint, do strive for crowns that fade —

And stoop to clasp metallic heaps conveyed

From the green sward their delving labour
scars —

When upright they might stand, and view the stars!

Where, having won the winning that they seek,
They lie beside the sceptre and the gold,
With fleshless hands that cannot wield or hold;
And the stars shine in their unseeing eyes?

Zerah. Of earth the terrible!

Where the blind matter brings

An awful potence out of impotence;

And all the spiritual prostrated lies,

Before the things of sense!

Where the strong human will saith 'ay' or 'no,'

Because the human pulse is quick or slow—
Where stronger Love succumbeth unto Change,
With only his own memories, for revenge!
Where is the root of tears—the mystery woe;
And one yet fearfuller—

Ador.

Thou meanest - Death.

Zerah. Nay! Death is fearful; but it hath
A sound more comprehensible,
More utterable by my speech
Than even woe can teach!
That fearfuller thou knowest well,
Tho' its utterance be not for thee,
Lest it blanch thy lips from glory—
Ay! the cursëd thing that moved
Its shadow of ill, long times ago,
Across our heaven's own shining floor!—
And when it passëd, some who were
On thrones of holy empire there,
Did reign—were seen—were—never more.—
Come nearer, O beloved!

- Ador. I am near thee. Thou hast seen

  This earth, whereof thy words have been?
- Zerah. I have seen it, I have trod,—
  When thrilling from the touch of God

It flowed from His hand along
Its lustrous path with spheric song —
Woeless, deathless, errorless!
And fearless, angel feet did press
The grasses brightening with their feet —
And God's own voice did mix its sound
In a solemn confluence oft
With the rivers' flowing round,
And the life-tree's waving soft.
Beautiful new earth, and strange!

Ador. Hast thou seen it since — the change?

Zerah. Askest thou? I fear — I fear —
To look upon it now!
I have beheld the ruined things
Only in the picturings
Of angels sent on earthward mission!
Strong one, e'en upon thy brow —
When with task completed, given

Back to us from earthly vision,

I have beheld thee silent stand,

Abstracted in the seraph band—

Without a smile in heaven!

Ador. Then thou wert not one of those

Whom the loving Father chose,

In pomp of dreams to sweep

O'er Judæa's grassy places,

O'er the shepherds and the sheep?

The clear calm starlight dimming,

All except one secret star,

With their brighter kinder faces:

And using heaven's own tune in hymning,—

While deep response o'er earth's own mountains

ran,—

" Peace on earth - goodwill to man!"

Zerah. "Glory to God!" - I said Amen afar!

And they who from that earthward mission are,
Within mine ears have told,
That the seven everlasting Spirits did hold
With such a sweet and prodigal constraint,
The meaning yet the mystery of the song,
The while they sang it, on their spirits strong;
That gazing down on earth's dark stedfastness,
And speaking the new peace in promises,
The love and pity made their voices faint
Into that low and tender music, keeping
The place in heaven, of what on earth, is
weeping!

Ador. Peace upon earth! Come down to it!

Zerah. Ah me!

I hear thereof uncomprehendingly.

Peace where the tempest — where the sighing is —

And worship of the idol, 'stead of His?

Ador. Yea! peace, where He is!

Zerah. He!

Say it again.

Ador. Where He is!

Zerah. Can it be?—

And is it sooth that earth retains a tree

Whose leaves, like Eden foliage, can be swayed

By breathing of His voice, nor shrink and fade?

Ador. There is a tree! — it hath no leaf or root!

Upon it hangs a curse for all its fruit!

Its shadow lies on Him —

Zerah. Beloved, beloved! thy words are very dim!

A shadow laid on Light!

A curse its presence giving

To th' ever Blest?

Ador. Yea! Death, to th' Everliving!

Zerah. But death that nears Him must forgo

Itself — its own essential rest;

And into life's emotion grow.

Ador. But what if He, the crowned Son,

Hath left his crown upon his throne,—

Hath walked earth in Adam's clay,

Eve's serpent to confound and slay—

Zerah. In clay - in clay!

Ador. And walking in the clay which He created,
Shall thro' it touch the death?——
What do I utter? what, conceive? Did
breath
Of demon howl it in a blasphemy?
Or was it mine own voice, informed, dilated,
By the seven confluent Spirits?— Speak—
answer me!

Who said man's victim was his deity?

Zerah. Beloved, beloved! the word came forth from thee!

Thine eyes are rolling in tempestuous light,

Above, below, around —

As putting thunder-questions without cloud,
Reverberate without sound,
To universal nature's depth and height.
The tremor of an unexpressed thought
Too self-amazed to shape itself aloud,
O'erruns the awful curving of thy lips:
And while thine hands are stretched

As newly they had caught

Some lightning from the Throne — or flashed

abroad

Some Eden-guarding sword —

Thy brows do alternate with wild eclipse

And radiance — with contrasted wrath and
love —

As God had called thee to a seraph's part,

With a man's quailing heart!

Ador. O heart — O heart of man!
O ta'en from human clay,
To be no seraph's, but Jehovah's own!
Made holy in the taking,
And yet unseparate

From death's perpetual ban,

And human feelings sad and passionate!

Still subject to the treacherous forsaking

Of other hearts, and its own stedfast pain!

O heart of man — of God! which God hath

ta'en

From out the dust, with its humanity

Mournful and weak and soft yet holy round it—

And bade its many pulses beating lie

Beside that incommunicable stir

Of Deity wherewith He interwound it!

O man! and is thy nature so defiled,

That all that holy Heart's devout law-keeping,
And low pathetic beat in deserts wild,
And gushings pitiful of tender weeping

For cruel ones who smote it into woe —

That all could cleanse thee not—without the flow

Of blood—the life-blood—His—and streaming so!

O earth, the thundercleft, windshaken !—where
The louder voice of "blood and blood" doth
rise —

Hast thou an altar for this sacrifice?—

O heaven — O vacant throne!

O crownëd hierarchies, that wear your crown
When His is put away!

Are ye unshamëd, that ye cannot dim
Your alien brightness to be liker Him,—
Assume a human passion — and down-lay
Your sweet secureness for congenial fears —

And teach your cloudless ever-burning eyes

The mystery of His tears?

Zerah. I am strong, I am strong!

Were I never to see my heaven again,
I would wheel to earth like the tempest rain
Which sweeps there with exultant sound
To lose its life in the reached ground!

I am strong, I am strong!

To mine inward vision waxeth dim

The shining seat of my heavenly birth —

I see but His, I see but Him —

The Maker's steps on His cruel earth!

Will the bitter herbs of earth grow sweet

To me, as touchëd by His feet?

Will the vexëd, curst humanity,

As worn by Him, begin to be

A blessëd — yea! a holy thing,

For love, and awe, and minist'ring?

I am strong, I am strong!

By our angel ken, shall we survey

His loving smile through his woeful clay?

I am swift, I am strong—

The love is bearing me along.——

Ador. My wings with thine! At once we go

To see the Holy in his woe!

## THE SERAPHIM.

## PART THE SECOND.

Ετερως γαρ ουκ οιδα φιλείν, αλλ 'η μετα του και την ψυχῆν εκδιδοναι την εμαυτου.

CHRYSOSTOM.

O blessëd Well of Love! O Floure of Grace,
O glorious Morning Starre! O Lampe of Light!
Most lively image of thy Father's face,
Eternal King of Glorie, Lord of Might,
Meeke Lambe of God!

SPENSER.

## THE SERAPHIM.

## PART THE SECOND.

The place is mid-air, above Judæa. Ador and Zerah are a little apart from the visible Angelic Hosts.

Ador. BELOVED! dost thou see? -

Zerah. Thee, — thee!

Thy burning eyes already are
Grown wild and mournful as a star,
Whose occupation is for aye
To look upon the place of clay,
Whereon thou lookest now!

The crown is fainting on thy brow

To the likeness of a cloud —
Thy forehead's self, a little bowed
From its aspect high and holy, —
As it would in meekness meet
Some seraphic melancholy!
Thy very wings that lately flung
In heavenly airs, an outline clear,
Flicker in their glory here;
And wear to each a shadow hung,

Dropped across thy feet.

The weights of earth around us lying,
Our breath comes heavily like sighing;
And in these strange contrasting glooms,
Stagnant with the scent of tombs,
Seraph faces, O my brother,
Show awfully to one another!

Ador. Dost thou see? dost thou see?

Zerah. Yea! our heaven's bright company -

1

Alone the memory of their brightness

Left in them, as in thee!

The circle upon circle, tier on tier -

The perpendicular sea, whose rampant white-

Stands fixed, because the sudden wind drops low —

The sea of living Ones, afar, anear,

Above us, and around!

Their songful lips divorcëd from all sound;

A darkness gliding down their silvery glances,-

Bowing their steadfast solemn countenances,

As if they heard God speak, and could not glow!

Ador. Look downward! dost thou see? -

Zerah. And wouldst thou press that vision on my words?

Hath not the changed Earth

A voice enough, of her own change, for thee— Whose voice is in her waters, moaning ever In every azure sea and silver river,

And all her leaping rills

That break abruptly from their forcëd mirth,

With a long sigh across the pastoral swards? —

Be satisfied! I see her vales, ungreen

Where steps of man have been!

Her thunder-riven hills —

That shake their piney heads, as who would say
"We are too beautiful for our decay!"—

Shall seraphs speak of these things? Let

Earth, to her earthly moan!

Voice of all things. Is there no moan but hers?

Ador. Hearest thou the attestation

Of the rousëd Universe, —

Like a desert lion shaking

alone

Dews of silence from its mane —
With an irrepressive passion,
Rising up, and witness making
To the earth-commingled pain
Of Him who stands (O patience sweet!)
In His own hand-prints of creation,
With human, bleeding feet? —

Voice of all things. Is there no moan but ours?-

Zerah. O meek, insensate things!
O congregated matters! who inherit
Instead of motive powers,
Impulsions God-supplied—
Instead of vital spirit,
A clear informing beauty—
Instead of creature duty,
A motion calm as rest!
Lights! without feet or wings,
In golden courses sliding!

c 5



Broad glooms! 'neath masses, hiding,

Whose lustrous heart away was prest

Into the argent stars!

Ye crystal, firmamental bars,

That hold the skyey waters free

From tide or tempest's ecstasy!

Airs universal! thunders lorn,

That wait your lightning in cloud-cave

Hewn out by the winds! O brave

And subtle Elements! the Holy

Hath charged me by your voice with folly.\*

Enough! the mystic arrow leaves its wound!

Return ye to your silences inborn,

Or to your inarticulated sound!—

Ador.

Zerah!-

Zerah.

Wilt thou rebuke?-

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;His angels He charged with folly."-Job iv. verse 18.

God hath rebuked me, brother !- I am weak !-

Ador. Zerah! my brother Zerah!—could I speak
Of thee, 'twould be of love to thee!

Zerah.

Thy look

Is fixed on earth, as mine upon thy face!——
Where shall I seek Him?—

I have thrown

One look upon that earth — but one —
And therewithal was sought and seen
Where her grasses showëd green,
Streaked with fairest flowers that grew;
And among her trees was hidden
Some remembrance of her Eden,
Wept over by the dew.

Beloved! He is not there!
Flowers, grasses are too dull to bear

Feet, before which, bowed adown,

I fain would quench my starry crown
Upon the wormy clay.

Where shall I seek Him?

No reply!

Hath language left thy lips, to place
Its vocal in thine eye?—
Ador, Ador! are we come
To a double portent, that
Dumb matter grows articulate,
And songful seraphs dumb?—
Ador, Ador!——

Ador.

I constrain

The passion of my silence. None
Of those places sweet and lone
Are dull enow to fit His pain!
Unto Him whose forming word
Gave to Nature flower and sward,

She hath given back again
Instead of flowers, the thorn;
Instead of sylvan calms, the human scorn.
Still, still, reluctant Seraph, gaze beneath!
There is a city ——

Zerah.

Could its throne remain,

(These very clouds are motioned by our breath —)

And fade not to a dream, when He Touchëd it?

Ador.

Ah me! ah me!

The victim seeks no throne!—
And Thou who hangest mute of speech,
'Twixt heaven and earth, with forehead yet
Stainëd by the bloody sweat——
God! man! Thou hast forgone
Thy throne in each!

Zerah. Ador! thine eyes behold Him?

Ador.

Yea!

Track the gazing of mine eyes

Downward, downward, with thine own:

Naming God within thine heart,

That its weakness may depart,

And the vision rise.

Seest thou yet, beloved?

Zerah.

I see

Beyond the city, crosses three,

And mortals three that hang thereon,

'Ghast and silent to the sun!

And round about them sweep and press

Living multitudes, whose father

Adam was — whose brows are dark

With his Cain's corroded mark;

Who curse with looks! Nay—let me rather

Turn unto the wilderness.

Ador. Turn not. God dwells with men.

Zerah.

Above

He dwells with angels; and they love.

Can these love?

With the living's pride

They stare at those who die: the streak
O' the cross's shade on brow and cheek,
Though falling there so wild and wide,
Being not dark enow to hide

A triumph upon both.—

Ador. The cross - the cross !-

Zerah.

A woman doth

Kneel the mid cross under —

Meekly, with her lips asunder,

And a motion upon each,

Too fast to show or suffer speech —

With folded lids as close as sleep,
Yet not as tranquil — for the eyes
That dream within, have room to weep
Drop after drop —

Ador.

Weep blood — weep blood—
All women! yea! all men!
These water-tears are vain—

They mock like laughter!

Zerah. O passionate heaven-dweller!

Ador.

Shall the flood

Of curses salt, whose foam is darkness, roll
Forward from 'parted years—
And backward, from the terrible hereafter—
And upward, from the present's bitter spring—
Yea! downward, haply, from the FatherKing,

To meet upon his soul?

And men weep only tears?

Zerah. Mine Ador! it is all they can! Their being

And being's strength make issue but in those.

And what have they with power to interpose

Betwixt their mortal grief and their foreseeing,

Save those transparent drops? what other

Than such, to men belong?

What other gifts hath Adam left behind

To sow his earth withal — to buy fame, crown,

And beats of love, and oracles of song;

Or wear upon the cheek in going down

Beneath the arid sod?

Nay! scraph eyes, my brother,

Should gaze most starry kind,

When tears from mortal eyelids 'gin to fall!

They are but little drops — yet all

The lovingest man gives man!

Ador.

Or God.

Zerah. All-givers need no gifts.

And if that voice said 'Give,' its sound would slay

Immortals, and its echo sweep away

The universe it made. What seraph lifts

A song so subtly wrought,

It is not in His hearing, less than nought,

Or is more than a woman's weeping? So,

Words soft as tears, above thee would I speak,

Thou woman! weep thy woe! I sinless, tearless — loving am, and weak!

Ador. Speak low — and not of love

Or human or angelic! Rather stand

Before the throne of that Supreme above,

In whose infinitude, the secrecies

Of thine own being lie hid, — and lift thine hand

Exultant, saying, "Lord God! I am wise!"—

Than utter here, "I love."

Zerah. And yet thine eyes

Do utter it. They melt in tender light —
The tears of Heaven.

Ador. Of Heaven. Ah me!

Zerah. Ador!

Ador. Say on.

Zerah. The crucified are three.

Beloved, they are unlike!

Ador. Unlike.

Zerah.

For one

Is as a man who sinned, and still

Doth wear contrastingly the wicked will —

The hard malign life-energy,

Stamped inward, in the parting soul's disdain,

On brow and lip that cannot change again.

The life-worked passion, and the death-fixed calm,

Lie coupled without mutual let or harm!

Ador. And one !-

Zerah. Is also as a sinful man;

And yet (O marvel!) of a spirit clear

And white as angel brows from Adam's ban,

And trembling more with worshipping than

fear!

The death upon his face Is rather shine than shade, A tender shine by looks belovëd made!

He seemeth dying in a blessëd place,

And less by iron wounds in hands and feet

Than heart-broke by new joy too sudden and

sweet—

Ador. And one! -

Zerah. And ONE —

Ador. Why dost thou pause?

Zerah. God! God!

Spirit of my spirit! who movest

Through seraph veins in burning deity,

To light the quenchless pulses!—

Ador. But hast trod

The depths of love in Thy peculiar nature;

And not in any Thou hast made and lovest
In narrow seraph hearts!—

Zerah. Above, Creator!

Within, Upholder !-

Ador. And below, below,

The creature's and th' upholden's sacrifice!

Zerah. Why do I pause? ----

Ador. There is a silentness

That answers thee enow —

That like a brazen sound

Excluding others, doth ensheathe us round!

Hear it! It is not from the visible skies,

Though they are very still, Unconscious that their own dropped dews

express

The light of heaven on every earthly hill!

It is not from the hills; though calm and bare

They, since their first creation,

Through midnight cloud or morning's glittering

air,

Or the deep deluge blindness, up toward The place whence issued the creating word,

And whence again shall come

The word that uncreates;

Have lift their brows in voiceless expectation.

It is not from the places that entomb

Man's dead — though common Silence there

Her soul to grand proportions, worthily

To fill life's vacant room!

Not there - not there!

Not yet within their chambers lieth He,

A dead One in His living world! His south

And west winds blowing over earth and sea,

And not a breath on that creating mouth!

But now, - in living pang -

A silentness doth hang

Upon the lips whose lightest word

Might in reverberate thunder roll abroad!

Silent art Thou, O my Lord,
Bowing down Thy stricken head!
Fearest Thou, a groan of thine
Would make the pulse of thy creation fail
As thine own pulse? — would rend the veil
Of visible things, and let the flood
Of th' unseen Light, th' essential God,
Rush in t' o'erwhelm the undivine? —
Thy silence, to my spirit, seems as dread!

Zerah. O silence!

Ador. Doth it say to thee — the NAME,
Slow-learning Scraph? —

Zerah. I have learnt!

Ador. The flame Perisheth in thine eyes.

Zerah. He opened His —

And looked! — I cannot bear ——

Ador. Their agony?

Zerah. Their love. God's depth is in them. From his brows

White, terrible in meekness, didst thou see

The lifted eyes unclose?

He is God, seraph! Look no more on me,
O God! I am not God!

Ador.

The loving is

Made awful in them by the sorrowful.

In heaven we could sustain them.

Zerah.

Heaven is dull,

Mine Ador, to man's earth! The light that burns

Unquenchably along the crystal sea —

The lifting of the golden harps between

The silver wings, outshaking lovely sound —

The winding, wandering music that returns

D

Upon itself in starry course, self-bound

To praise, and praise, and praise, in blessëd

round—

The God-thoughts in our midst that intervene,

And glide like rays from out the supreme

Throne,

More sensible than visible; each one

The separate presence of a new delight!

My heaven! my home of heaven! my fair and bright

Heaven-throne! what are ye to this dust and death,

This cloud, this cold, these tears, this failing breath,

Where God's immortal love is glorified

In this man's mortal wee? —

Ador. His eyes are very deep yet calm ----

Zerah.

No more

On me, Jehovah-man-

Ador.

Calm-deep! They show

A passion which is silent. Grief is still,

By its own weight, within them. They are

seeing

No earth, no heaven! no men, that slay and curse —

No seraphs, that adore!

Their gaze is on th' invisible, the dread —

The things we cannot see or think or speak,
Because we are too happy, or too weak! —

The sea of ill, for which the universe,

With all its pilëd space, can find no shore,

With all its life, no living one to tread!

His Godhead holds His human

More soft than the first cradle-watch in woman,

More pure than man's first thought in Eden air,—

(And that was man's first prayer!)

D 2

Sustains it with the strong Jehovah-being,

To bear the gaze adown,

Conceive the vast despair,

And feel the billowy griefs come up to drown,—

Zerah. Thus! do I find thee thus? My Lord, my Lord,

Nor perish, until all be finishëd.

The echoes are still tremulous along

The heavenly mountains, of the latest song

Thy manifested glory swept abroad,

In rushing past our lips! They echo aye

"Creator! Thou art strong!—
Creator! Thou art blessëd over all."
By what new utterance shall I now recall,
Unteaching the heaven-echoes? Dare I say,
"Creator! Thou art feebler than thy work!
Creator, Thou art sadder than thy creature!

A man, and not a God -

A worm, and not a man,—
Yea, no worm—but a curse?"—

I dare not, so, mine heavenly phrase reverse.

Albeit the piercing thorn and thistle dark
(Whose seed from Eve's fruit-plucking hand
began

To drop amid her garden and defeature)

Be garnered darklier in thy soul! the rod

That smites Thee never blossoming, —and Thou

Grief-bearer for thy world, with unkinged brow—

I have an angel tongue — I know but praise!

Ador. Hereafter shall the blood-bought captives raise

The passion song of blood!

Zerah. And we, extend

Our holy vacant hands towards the Throne,

Crying 'We have no music!'

Ador. Rather blend

Our musics into one!

The sanctities and sanctified above

Shall each to each, with lifted looks serene,

Their shining faces lean,

And mix th' adoring breath,

And breathe the sweet thanksgiving!

Zerah.

But the love -

The love, mine Ador!

Ador.

Do we love not?

Zerah.

Yea!

But not as man shall! not with life for death
New-throbbing through the startled being! not
With strange astonished smiles, that ever may
Gush passionate like tears, and fill their place!
Nor yet with speechless memories of what
Earth's winters were, deepening th' eternal green
Of every heavenly palm,
Whose windless shadeless calm

Moves only at the breath of the Unseen!

Oh! not with this blood on us—and this face,—

Still, haply, pale with sorrow that it bore

In our behalf, and tender evermore

With nature all our own,—toward us gazing!—

Nor yet with these forgiving hands upraising

Their unreproachful wounds, alone to bless!

Alas, Creator! shall we love Thee less

Than mortals shall?

## Ador.

We love in our proportion — to the bound
Thine infinite, our finite, set around,
And that is finitely, — Thou, infinite
And worthy infinite love! And our delight
Is watching the dear love poured out to Thee,
From ever fuller chalice. Blessëd they,
Who love Thee more than we do! blessëd we,

Beholding that out-loving lovingness,

Amen! so let it be!

And winning in the sight, a double bliss,

For all so lost in love's supremacy!

The bliss is better! only on the sad

Cold earth, there are who say

It seemeth better to be great than glad.

The bliss is better! Love Him more, O man,

Than sinless seraphs can.

Zerah. Yea! love Him more.

Voices of the angelic multitude. Yea! more!

Ador.

The loving word

Is caught by those from whom we stand apart:

For Silence hath no deepness in her heart,

Where love's low name low breathed, would not
be heard

By angels, clear as thunder.

Angelic voices.

Love him more!

Ador. Sweet voices, swooning o'er

The music which ye make!

Albeit to love, there were not ever given

A mournful sound, when uttered out of heaven,

Ye fitly would that angel sadness take!

Of love be silent now! we gaze adown

Upon th' incarnate Love who wears no crown.

Zerah. No crown! The woe instead

Is heavy on His head,

Pressing inward on His brain,

With a hot and clinging pain,

Till all tears are prest away—

And clear and calm His vision may

Peruse the long abyss!

No rod, no sceptre is

D 5

Holden in His fingers pale.

They close instead upon the nail,

Concealing the sharp dole —

Nor ever stirring to put by

The fair hair streaked with blood,

Drooping forward from the rood,

Helplessly — heavily —

On the cheek that waxeth colder,

Whiter ever, — and the shoulder

Where the government was laid!

His pity makes His piteous state —

Will He be uncompassionate

Alone to His proper soul?

Yea! will He not lift up
His lips from the bitter cup,
His brows from the dreary weight,
His hands from the clenching rood —

Crying, "My Father, give to me

Again the joy I had with Thee,

Or ere this earth was made?"—

No stir—no sound—

The love and woe being interwound,

He cleaveth to the woe:

And putteth forth heaven's strength below—

To bear.

Ador. And that creates His anguish now,

Which made His glory, there!

Zerah. Shall this indeed be so?

Awake, thou Earth! behold!

Thou, uttered forth of old,

In all thy life-emotion,

In all thy vernal noises;

In the rollings of thine ocean,

Leaning founts, and rivers running;

In thy woods' prophetic heaving,

Ere the rains a stroke have given;

In thy winds' exultant voices
When they feel the hills anear!
In the firmamental sunning,
And the tempest which rejoices
Thy full heart with an awful cheer!
Thou! uttered forth of old
And with all thy musics, rolled
In a breath abroad,
By the plastic Word!
Awake! He is here! behold!—
Even thou—

beseems it good
To thy vacant vision dim,
That the deathly ruin should,
For thy sake, encompass Him?
That the master-word should lie
A silence — while His own
Proceeded harmony —
The faintest echo of His lightest tone

Is sweeping in a choral triumph by?----

Awake! emit a cry! And say, albeit used From Adam's ancient years To falls of briny tears, To frequent sighs unloosed, Caught back to press again On bosoms zoned with pain -To corses still and sullen The shine and music dulling With closed eyes and ears, That nothing sweet can enter -Commoving thee no less With that forced quietness, Than earthquakes in thy centre — Thou hast not learnt to bear This new divine despair! These tears that sink into thee, These dying eyes that view thee,

This droppëd blood from lifted rood,

They darken and undo thee!

Thou canst not, presently, sustain this corse!

Cry, cry, thou hast not force!
Cry; thou wouldst fainer keep
Thy hopeless charnels deep—
Thyself a general tomb—
Where first and second Deaths
Sit gazing face to face,
And mar each other's breaths—
While silent bones through all the place,
'Neath sun and moon do faintly glisten,
And seem to lie and listen
For the tramp of the coming Doom.

Is it not meet

That they who erst the Eden fruit did eat,

Should champ the ashes?

That they who wrapt them in the thunder-cloud, Should wear it as a shroud,

Perishing by its flashes?

That they who vexed the lion, should be rent?-

Cry, cry - " I will sustain my punishment,

The sin being mine! but take away from me

This visioned Dread — this Man — this Deity."

The Earth. I have groaned — I have travailed — I am

weary —

I am blind with mine own grief, and cannot see,

As clear-eyed angels can, His agony:

And what I see, I also can sustain,

Because His power protects me from His pain.

I have groaned — I have travailed — I am

weary —

I am very dreary,

Hearkening the thick sobs of my children's heart:

And can I say "Depart,"

To that Atoner making calm and free?

Am I a God as He,

To lay down peace and joy as willingly?

Scornful voices from the Earth. If verily this be th'

Eternal's son —

Ador. Thou hearest! man is grateful!

Zerah. Can I hear,

Nor darken into man? nor cease for ever My seraph smile to wear?

Was it for such,

It pleasëd Him to overleap

His glory with His love, and sever

From the God-light and the throne,

And all angels bowëd down—

For whom His every look did touch

New notes of joy from th' unworn string

Of an eternal worshipping?

For such, He left His heaven?

There, though never bought by blood

And tears, we gave Him gratitude!

We loved him there, though unforgiven!

The light is riven

Above around,

And downwardly in lurid fragments flung,

That catch the mountain pinnacle and stream,
With momentary gleam,
Then perish in the water and the ground!
River and waterfall,
Forest and wilderness,
Mountain and city, are together wrung
Into one shape, and that is shapelessness—
The darkness stands for all.

Ador. The pathos hath the day undone!

The death-look of His eyes

Hath overcome the sun,

And made it sicken in its narrow skies—

But not to death!——

Zerah. He dieth! Through the dark,

He still, He only, is discernible—

The barëd hands and feet transfixëd stark,—

The countenance of patient anguish white, —

Do make, themselves, a light

More dreadful than the glooms which round
them dwell,

And therein do they shine.

## Ador.

God! Father-God!

Perpetual Radiance on the radiant throne!

Lift up the lids of inward Deity,

Flashing abroad

Thy burning Infinite!

Light up this dark, where there is nought to see,

Except the unimagined agony

Upon the sinless forehead of thy Son!

Zerah. God! tarry not! Behold, enow
Hath He wandered as a stranger,
Groanëd as a victim! Thou,
Appear for Him, O Father!

Appear for Him, Avenger! Appear for Him, just One and holy One; For He is holy and just! At once the darkness and the evil scatter, And from His being strike and break And hurl aback to ancient dust, These mortals that make blasphemies With their made breath! this earth and skies That only grow a little dim, Seeing their curse on Him! But Him of all forsaken. Of creature and of brother, Never wilt Thou forsake! Thy living and Thy loving cannot slacken Their firm essential hold upon each other -And well Thou dost remember how His part Was still to lie upon Thy breast, and be

Partaker of the light that dwelt in Thee

And how while silence trembled round the throne, Thou countedst by the beatings of His heart, The moments of Thine own eternity!

Awaken,

O right Hand with the lightnings! Again gather
His glory to thy glory! What estranger —
What ill most strong in evil, can be thrust
Between the faithful Father and the Son?
Appear for Him, O Father!
Appear for Him, Avenger!
Appear for Him, just One and holy One! —

Ador. Thy face, upturned toward the throne, is dark—
Thou hast no answer, Zerah.

For He is holy and just.

Zerah.

No reply, -

O unforsaking Father? -

Ador.

Hark!

Instead of downward voice, a cry

Is uttered from beneath!

Zerah. And by a sharper sound than death,

Mine immortality is riven!

The heavy darkness which doth tent the sky,

Floats backward as by a sudden wind —

But I see no light behind!

But I feel the farthest stars are all

Piercëd and shaken —

And I know a shadow sad and broad,

Doth fall — doth fall

On our vacant thrones in heaven!

Voice from the Cross. My God, My God,

Why hast Thou me forsaken?

The Earth. Ah me! Ah me! the dreadful why!

My sin is on Thee, sinless One! Thou art
God-orphaned, for my burden on Thy head.
Dark sin! white innocence! endurance dread!
Be still, within your shrouds, my buried dead —
Nor work with this quick horror round mine heart!

Zerah. He hath forsaken Him! - I perish -

Ador. Hold
Upon His name! We perish not. Of old

His will ——

Zerah. I seek it through the mysteries dim—

My God, my God! where is it? Doth that

curse,

Reverberate, spare seraph or universe?

He hath forsaken Him.

Ador. And He is true!

Angel Voices. We faint — we droop —

Our love doth tremble like fear —

Voices of fallen Angels, from the earth. Do we pre-

Or are we lost? — Hath not the ill we did

Been heretofore our good?

Is it not ill, that One, all sinless, should

Hang heavy with all curses, on a cross?

Nathless, that cry! — with huddled faces hid

Within the empty graves which men did scoop

To hold more damnëd dead, we shudder through

Our triumph, or — our loss!

Voice from the Cross. IT IS FINISHED.

Zerah.

Hark, again !

Like a victor, speaks the Slain -

Angel voices. Finished be the trembling vain!

Ador. Upward, like a lovëd Son,

Looketh the erst orphaned One —

Angel voices. Finished is the mystic pain!

Voices of Fallen Angels. His deathly forehead at the word,

Gleameth like a seraph sword!

Angel voices. Finished is the demon reign!

Ador. His breath, as living God, createth —

His breath, as dying man, completeth!

Angel voices. Finished work His hands sustain.

Zerah. Maker! Sacrifice! before Thee Shall a never finished glory,—

Angel voices. Never finished praise remain!

E

The Earth. In mine ancient sepulchres,

Mine Adam, dead six thousand years,

Unwakened by the universe's

Everlasting moan

Aye his ghastly silence, mocking—

Unwakened by his children's knocking

'Gainst his old sepulchral stone—

"Adam, Adam! thou didst curse us—

Thy curse is on us yet!"——

Unwakened by the ceaseless tears

Wherewith they made his cerement wet—

Starts with sudden life, and hears

Angel voices. Finished is his bane!

Voice from the Cross. My Father! TO THINE HANDS MY SPIRIT IS GIVEN!

Through the slow dropping of the caverned eaves,-

Ador. Hear the wailing winds that be

By wings of unclean spirits made!

They, in that last look, surveyed

The love they lost in losing heaven,—

The love they lost in losing heaven,—
And passionately flee!

With a cry that threadeth clear

The natural storms — though they are lifting
God's strong cedar-roots like leaves —
(What time from a hundred graves
Gleamingly the dead arise,
Viewing with their death-calmed eyes

The wild turmoil) — and downward rifting
Mountain rocks to valley swards,

There to meet the earthquake sound

Hurtling 'neath the hollow ground! —

Hear the wail o' the Spirits! hear! —

Zerah. I hear alone the memory of His words!

E 2

#### THE EPILOGUE.

My song is done!

My voice that long hath faltered shall be still.

The mystic darkness drops from Calvary's hill,

Into the common light of this day's sun!—

I see no more Thy cross, O holy Slain!

I hear no more the beat and turbulence

Of startled elements

That felt thy countenance too still — nor yell

Of demons sweeping past it to their prison!

The skies, that turned to darkness with Thy
pain,

Make now a summer's day,—

And on my changëd ear, that Sabbath bell

Recordeth Christ is risen!—

 $\label{eq:AndI} \begin{tabular}{ll} And I — ah! what am I \\ \begin{tabular}{ll} To counterfeit with faculty earth-darkened \end{tabular}$ 

Seraphic brows of light,

And seraph language never used or hearkened?

Ah me! what word that Seraphs say, could come

From mouth so used to sighs — so soon to lie

Sighless, because then breathless, in the tomb?—

Bright ministers of God and grace! — of grace
Because of God! — whether ye bow adown,
In your own heaven, before the living face
Of Him who died, and deathless wears the
crown —

Or whether at this hour, ye haply are

Anear, around me, hiding in the night

Of this permitted ignorance, your light —

This feebleness to spare —
Forgive, that my low earthly heart should dare
Shape images of unincarnate spirits,
And lay upon their burning lips a thought

Damp with the weeping which mine earth inherits!—

And while ye find in such hoarse music wrought

To copy yours, a cadence all the while

Of sin and sorrow — only pitying smile! —

Ye know to pity, well! -

I too may haply smile another day,

At the far recollection of this lay—

When God may call me in your midst to dwell,

And hear your most sweet music's miracle,

And see your shining faces! May it be!

For His remembered sake—the Slain on rood—

Who rolled His earthly garment in red blood,

That feeble ones, the frail and faint like me,

Before His heavenly throne should walk in

white!

# THE POET'S VOW.

—— O be wiser thou,

Instructed that true knowledge leads to love.

Wordsworth.

# THE POET'S VOW.

PART THE FIRST.

SHOWING WHEREFORE THE VOW WAS MADE.

Eve is a twofold mystery—

The stillness Earth doth keep—

The motion wherewith human souls

Toward each other leap—

As if all spirits which Earth inherits,

Foreknew they part in sleep.

The rowers lift their oars to view

Each other in the sea;

E 5

The landsmen watch the rocking boats,
In a pleasant company;
While up the hill go gladlier still
Dear friends by two and three.

The peasant's wife hath looked without

Her cottage door and smiled!

The peasant, 'stead of scythe or spade,

Doth clasp his youngest child

Which hath no speech, but its hands can reach

And stroke his forehead mild.

A poet sate that eventide

Within his hall alone,
As silent as its ancient lords
In their coffined place of stone;
When the bat hath shrunk from the praying monk—

And the praying monk is gone.

83

Nor wore the dead a stiller face

Beneath the cerement's roll:

His lip seemed carved to an endless thought

No language dared controul;

And his steadfast eye burnt inwardly,

As gazing on his soul.

You would not deem that brow could e'er

Ungentle moods express:

Yet seemed it in this troubled world,

Too calm for gentleness!

The very star that shines from far,

Shines trembling ne'ertheless.

It lacked — all need — the softening light
Which other brows supply:
We should conjoin the scathed trunks
Of our humanity,

That each leafless spray entwinëd may Look softer 'gainst the sky.

None gazed within the poet's face —

The poet gazed in none!

He threw a lonely shadow aye

In light of moon and sun,

Affronting nature's heaven-dwelling creatures

With wrong to nature done.

Yea, and this poet daringly,

The nature at his heart,

And that quick tune along his veins

He could not change by art,

Had vowed his blood of brotherhood

Unto a lonely part.

He vowëd not in fear or wrath, Or grief's fantastic whim: But when the weights and shows of things

Too closely compassed him,

On his soul's eyelid the pressure slid,

And made its vision dim.

He held his soul above his clay
'Twixt earth and sea and sky,
T' imbue with shade and wave and cloud
Its immortality—
But the mortal things fell from its wings
And left them hot and dry.

He bathed it in the sea of thought,

Unsensual, rolling aye —

Where God's unwaning countenance

O'erhung a moonlike sway —

But the tide was dark with the serpent's mark,

And God's was turned away.

He looked on all things beautiful,

The shadow o'er them lying —

Gave ear to all things musical,

Whose loudest note is sighing —

He shook to the tone of creation's groan,
And the voice of Death replying.

He cried — "O touching, patient Earth,

That weepest in thy glee!

Whom God created very good,

And very mournful, we!

Thy voice of moan doth reach His throne,

As Abel's rose from thee.

"O deep unsensual sea of thought,

That darkenest to and fro—

Whose waters are unsilent clouds

Where eagles dare not go!

O motion wild! O wave defiled!

Our curse hath made thee so.

- " We! and our curse! Do I partake

  The dreary, cruel sin?

  Have I the apple at my lips?

  The money-lust within?

  Do I human stand with the wronging hand,

  To the blasting heart akin?—
- "Thou solemn pathos of all things!
  Ye things of sense and mind!
  Behold! subduëd to your cause,
  An holy wrath I find;
  And for your sake the bondage break,
  That knits me to my kind.
- " Hear me forswear man's sympathies,

  His pleasant yea and no —

His riot on the piteous earth

Whereon his thistles grow —

His changing love — with stars above!

His pride — with graves below! —

- "Hear me forswear his roof by night —

  His bread and salt by day —

  His talkings at the lighted hearth —

  His greetings by the way —

  His musing looks his systemed books —

  All man, for aye and aye!
- "That so my purged, once human heart,
  From all the human rent,
  May gather strength to pledge and drink
  Your wine of wonderment;
  While you pardon me, all blessingly,
  The woe mine Adam sent.

- "And I shall feel your unseen smiles,
  Innumerous, fixëd, deep,
  As soft as haunted Adam once,
  Though sadder, round me creep;—
  As slumbering men have mystic ken
  That others watch their sleep.
  - "And ever, when I lift my brow
    Toward the setting sun,
    No voice of woman or of child
    Recording 'Day is done,'—
    Your silences shall a love express
    More deep than such an one!"

### THE POET'S VOW.

### PART THE SECOND.

SHOWING TO WHOM THE VOW WAS DECLARED.

The poet's vow was inly sworn —

The poet's vow was told:

He parted 'mong his crowding friends

The silver and the gold.

They claspëd bland his gift, — his hand, In a something slacker hold.

They wended forth, the crowding friends,
With farewells smooth and kind —



They wended forth, the solaced friends,

And left but twain behind:

One loved him true as brothers do,

And one was Rosalind.

He said — "My friends have wended forth,
With farewells smooth and kind.
Mine oldest friend! my plighted bride,
Why linger ye behind?
For Roland, let my fair bride be —
And mine house and lands of ancestry,
A dower for Rosalind.

"And when beside your wassail board
Ye own a blessëd lot,
I charge you, that the giver be
In all his gifts forgot!
Or alone of all his words recall
These last — Lament me not."

She lookëd at him silently,

With her large, doubting eyes, —

Like a child that never knew but love,

Whom words of wrath surprise —

Till the rose did break from either cheek,

And the sudden tears did rise.

She lookëd at him mournfully,

While her large eyes were grown

Yet larger with the steady tears;

Till, all his purpose known,

She turnëd slow as she would go—

The tears were shaken down.—

She turnëd slow as she would go,

Then quickly turned again;

And gazing in his face to see

Some little touch of pain —

"I thought," she said, — and shook her head,

The triëd speech was vain —

- "I thought but I am half a child,

  And very sage art thou —

  That looking on the heaven and earth

  Did keep us soft and low.

  They have drawn my tears i'the springs of years,

  Or ere I wept as now.
- "But now that in thy face I read

  Their cruel homily,

  Before their beauty I would fain

  Untouched, unloving be;

  Could I look upon the senseless sun,

  As thou canst look on me.
- "And couldest thou as calmly view

  Thy childhood's far abode,

  Where little footsteps mixed with thine

  Upon the grassy sod?

And thy mother's look on holy book

Fell, like a thought of God?

- "O brother! called so, ere her last

  Explaining words were said! —

  O fellow-watcher in her room,

  With hushëd voice and tread! —

  What friend did stand with claspëd hand
  In thine, beside the dead?
- "I will not live Sir Roland's bride,

  Nor rule that castle old!

  Thus crush I 'neath my parting feet,

  The deeds of hill and wold.

  The tears I weep, are mine to keep,

  And worthier than thy gold."

The poet and Sir Roland stood

Alone, each turned to each;

Till Roland brake the silence left

By that soft-throbbing speech—

"Poor heart!" he cried, "it vainly tried

The distant heart to reach!

- "And thou, O distant, sinful heart,

  That climbest up so high,

  To wrap and blind thee with the snows

  That cause to dream and die—

  What blessing can, from lips of man,

  Approach thee with his sigh?—
- " Ay! what from earth create for man,
  And moaning in his moan?

  From mystic truths revealed to man —
  That use his human tone?

From the Spirits seven, that show in heaven,

A MAN upon the throne?—

- "A man on earth HE wandered once,
  All meek and undefiled:
  And those who loved him, said he wept—
  None ever said he smiled—
  Yet there might have been a smile unseen,
  As he clasped that blessëd child.
- "And now HE pleadeth up in heaven
  For our humanities,
  Till the ruddy light on seraphs' wings,
  In pale emotion dies.
  They can better bear his Godhead's glare,
  Than the pathos of his eyes!
- " I will go pray that God in man, With bowed face and knee,

F

To teach thee on the earth HE made,
His finger's print to see;
But plainer yet the blood-stain wet
His manhood left for thee!

- "So, for the sake of that dear blood
  God-shed, and human e'er,
  Tears, like it, moist and warm with love,
  Thy reverent eyes may wear,
  To see i' the face of Adam's race
  The nature God doth share."
- "I heard," the poet said, "thy voice
  As dimly as thy breath!

  It sounded like the noise of life
  To one anear his death—

  Or waves that fail to stir the pale

  Sere leaf they roll beneath.

- "For while it sounded, I was 'ware, —
  Stretched round me like a mist —
  Of white cold palms of creatures high,
  Confused, and never wist!
  O'er mine heart they bowed their foreheads
  proud,
  And stilled it while they kist.
- "The castle and its lands are thine —
  The poor's thy wish be done!

  Go, man! go, Roland! I abide
  I' the ruined hall, alone —
  The wind and rain have washed the stain
  Men workëd in its stone."

# THE POET'S VOW.

PART THE THIRD.

SHOWING HOW THE VOW WAS KEPT.

He dwelt alone, and sun and moon,
Perpetual witness made
Of his repented humanness —
Until they seemed to fade.
His face did so; for he did grow
Of his own soul afraid.

The self-poised God may dwell alone
In inward glorying —

But raptest angel waiteth for

His brother's voice to sing!

And a lonely creature of sinful nature —

It is an awful thing!

E'en to himself an awful thing,
While many years did roll,
He bore that crushing solitude —
A part beneath the whole —
That pressure of God's infinite
Upon his finite soul.

The poet at his lattice sate,

And downward looked he —

Three Christians passëd by to prayers, With mute ones in their ee. Each turned above a face of love,

And called him to the far chapelle

With voice more tuneful than its bell—

But still they wended three!

There passed by a bridal pomp,

A bridegroom and his dame —

She speaketh low for happiness,

She blusheth red for shame. —

But never a tone of benison

From out the lattice came!

A little child with inward song,

No louder noise to dare,

Stood near the wall to see at play

The lizards green and rare —

Unblessed the while for his childish smile

Which cometh unaware!





### THE POET'S VOW.

#### PART THE FOURTH.

SHOWING HOW ROSALIND FARED BY THE KEEPING OF THE VOW.

In death-sheets lieth Rosalind,
As white and still as they;
And the old nurse that watcheth her,
Rose up with "Well-a-day!"
And oped the casement to let in
The sun, and that sweet doubtful din
Which droppeth from the grass and bough
Sans wind and bird — none knoweth how —
To cheer her as she lay.

The old nurse started when she saw

Her sudden look of woe!

But the quick wan tremblings round her mouth
In a meek smile did go;

And calm she said — "When I am dead,
Dear nurse, it shall be so!

"But now, shut out those sights and sounds,
And pray God pardon me,
That I without this pain, no more
His blessëd works can see!
And lean beside me, loving nurse,
That thou mayest hear, ere I am worse,
What thy last love must be."

The loving nurse leant over her,

As white she lay beneath —

The old eyes searching — dim with life —

The young ones dim with death, —

To read their look, if sound forsook

The trying trembling breath.

- "When all this feeble breath is done,
  And I on bier am laid,
  My tresses smoothed for never a feast,
  My body in shroud arrayed —
  Uplift each palm in a saintly calm,
  As if that still I prayed.
- "And heap beneath mine head the flowers
  I loved when a child, —
  The little white flowers from the wood,
  Which grow there thick and wild —
  Which I plucked for thee, and thy gramercy
  The pleasant toil beguiled.
  - "Weep not! I weep not! Death is strong;—
    The eyes of Death are dry;—

But lay this scroll upon my breast
When hushed its heavings lie;
And wait awhile for the corpse's smile
Which shineth presently.

- "And when it shineth, straightway call
  Thy youngest children dear;
  And bid them gently carry me
  Barefacëd on the bier—
  But bid them pass my kirkyard grass
  That waveth long anear.
- "And up the bank where I used to sit
  And dream what life would be,
  Along the brook, with its sunny look
  Akin to living glee —
  O'er the windy hill, through the forest still,
  Let them gently carry me.

"And when they near the ruined hall,
In silence let them lay
The bier before the barrëd door,
And silent wend away—
For there, alone with the lifeless one,
The living God must stay."

The old nurse looked in her eyes,

Whose mutual look was gone, —

The old nurse stooped to her mouth,

Whose answering voice was done.—

And nought she heard, till a little bird

Upon the casement's woodbine swinging,

Broke out into a loud sweet singing

For joy o' the summer sun!

"Alack! alack!" — she watched no more —

With head on knee she wailed sore;

And the little bird sang o'er and o'er

For joy o' the summer sun!

## THE POET'S VOW.

PART THE FIFTH.

SHOWING HOW THE VOW WAS BROKEN.

The poet oped his barrëd door,

The midnight sky to view.

A spirit-feel was in the air

Which seemed to touch his spirit bare

Whenever his breath he drew:

And the stars a liquid softness had,

As alone their holiness forbade

Their falling with the dew.

They shine upon the fixed hills—
Upon the running tide;—
They shine upon the forest leaves,
And the little mosses pied;—
They shine on every lovely place—
They shine upon the corpse's face,
As it were fair beside.

It lay before him, humanlike,
Yet so unlike a thing!

More awful in its shrouded pomp
Than any crowned king!

All calm and cold, as it did hold,
Some secret, glorying.

A heavier weight than of its clay

Clung to his heart and knee!

As if those joined palms could strike,

He staggered groaningly;—

And then o'erhung, without a groan,

The meek close mouth that smiled alone,

Whose speech the scroll must be.

THE WORDS OF ROSALIND'S SCROLL.

- "I LEFT thee last, a feeble child,
  In those remembered years.
  I come to thee, a solemn corpse,
  Which neither feels nor fears!
  They laid the death-weights on mine eyes,
  To seal them safe from tears!
- "Look on me with thine own calm look —

  I meet it calm as thou!

  No look of thine can change this smile,

  Or break thy sinful vow:

  My silent heart, of thine earth, is part —

  It cannot love thee now.

- "But out, alas! these words are writ

  By a living loving one,

  Adown whose cheeks, the proofs of life,

  The human tears do run.

  Ah! let th' unloving corpse controul

  Thy thought toward the loving soul

  Whose place of rest is won!
- "I have prayed for thee with the wailing voice
  Thy memory drew from me!

  I have prayed for thee with the moveless lips,
  In the anguish none could see!
  They whispered oft, 'She sleepeth soft'—
  But I only prayed for thee.
  - "Go to! I pray for thee no more—
    The corpse's tongue is still!

    Albeit its palms may point to heaven,
    They point there stiff and chill!

No farther woe, from the sin below, Its tranquil heart can thrill.

"I charge thee, by the living's prayer,

The corpse's silentness —

To wring from out thy proper soul

A prayer our God shall bless!

Lest the heaven-palm droop within my hand,

And pale among the saints I stand,

A saint companionless."

Bow lower down before the throne,

Triumphant Rosalind!

He boweth on thy corpse his face —

He weepeth as the blind.

Twas a dread sight to see them so —

For the senseless corpse rocked to and fro,

With the wail of his living mind.

But dreader sight, could such be seen,

His living mind did lie;

Whose long-subjected humanness

Gave out its lion cry,

And fiercely rent its tenement

In a mortal agony!

I tell you, friends, had you heard his wail,

'Twould haunt you in court and mart,

And in merry feast, until you set

Your cup down to depart —

That weeping wild of a grievëd child

From a proud man's broken heart.

O broken heart! O broken vow,

That wore so proud a feature!

God, grasping as a thunderbolt

His own renounced nature,

Smote him therewith — i' the presence high
Of his so worshipped earth and sky
That looked on all with silent eye —
A wailing human creature.

Yea! and a human one too weak

To bear his human pain —

(May Heaven's dear grace have spoken peace

To his dying heart and brain!)

For when they came at dawn of day

To lift the lady's corpse away,

Her bier was holding twain.

They dug beneath the kirkyard grass,

For both one dwelling deep:

And after many years were done,

Sir Roland brought his little son

To watch the funeral heap.

And, when the happy boy would rather

Turn upward his blithe eyes to see

The wood-doves nodding from the tree—

"Nay, boy, look downward!" said his father;

"And hold it in thy constant ken,

That God's own everlastingness

(One making one with strong compress)

Man's sympathies doth keep!

Thou mayst not smile like other men,

Yet like them thou must weep."

## THE ROMAUNT OF MARGRET.

Can my affections find out nothing best
But still and still remove?—

QUARLES.

## THE ROMAUNT OF MARGRET.

I PLANT a tree whose leaf
The cypress leaf will suit;
And when its shade is o'er you laid,
Turn ye and pluck the fruit!
Now reach mine harp from off the wall
Where shines the sun aslant:
The sun may shine and we be cold—
O hearken, loving hearts and bold,
Unto my wild romaunt,
Margret, Margret.

Sitteth the fair ladyè
Close to the river side,
Which runneth on with a merry tone,
Her merry thoughts to guide.
It runneth through the trees,
It runneth by the hill
Nathless the ladye's thoughts have found
A way more pleasant still.—
Margret, Margret.

The night is in her hair,

And giveth shade to shade;

And the pale moonlight, on her forehead white,

Like a spirit's hand is laid:—

Her lips part with a smile,

Instead of speakings done—

I ween she thinketh of a voice,

Albeit uttering none!

Margret, Margret!

All little birds do sit

With heads beneath their wings -

Nature doth seem in a mystic dream,

Apart from her living things.

That dream by that ladyè

I ween is unpartook;

For she looketh to the high cold stars,

With a tender human look!

Margret, Margret!

The ladye's shadow lies

Upon the running river.

It lieth no less in its quietness,

For that which resteth never:

Most like a trusting heart

Upon a passing faith, -

Or as upon the course of life,

The stedfast doom of death!

Margret, Margret.

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### 124 THE ROMAUNT OF MARGRET.

The ladye doth not move —

The ladye doth not dream —

Yet she seeth her shade no longer laid

In rest upon the stream!

It shaketh without wind —

It parteth from the tide —

It standeth upright in the cleft moonlight —

It sitteth at her side.

Margret, Margret!

Look in its face, ladyè,

And keep thee from thy swound!

With a spirit bold, thy pulses hold,

And hear its voice's sound!

For so will sound thy voice,

When thy face is to the wall;

And such will be thy face, ladyè,

When the maidens work thy pall —

Margret, Margret.

" Am I not like to thee?"-

The voice was calm and low -

And between each word there seemed heard

The universe's flow! -

" The like may sway the like!

By which mysterious law,

Mine eyes from thine, my lips from thine,

The light and breath may draw."

Margret, Margret.

" My lips do need thy breath,

My lips do need thy smile, -

And my pale deep eyne, that light in thine,

Which met the stars erewhile -

Yet go with light and life,

If that thou lovest one

In all the earth, who loveth thee

More truly than the sun."

Margret, Margret!

#### THE ROMAUNT OF MARGRET.

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Her cheek had waxëd white,

As cloud at fall of snow!

Then like to one at set of sun,

It waxëd red also!—

For love's name maketh bold,

As if the loved were near!

And sighëd she the deep long sigh

Which cometh after fear.

Margret, Margret!

- "Now sooth I fear thee not —
  Shall never fear thee now!"

  (And a noble sight was the sudden light
  Which lit her lifted brow!)
- "Can earth be dry of streams;
  Or hearts, of love?"—she said—
- "Who doubteth love, can know not love He is already dead!"

Margret, Margret.

"I have" — and here her lips

Some word in pause did keep;

And gave the while a quiet smile,

As if they paused in sleep! -

" I have - a brother dear,

A knight of knightly fame!

I broidered him a knightly scarf

With letters of my name."

Margret, Margret.

" I fed his grey goss hawk -

I kissed his fierce bloodhound -

I sate at home when he might come,

And caught his horn's far sound -

I sang him songs of eld,

I poured him the red wine -

He looked from the cup and said,

I love thee, sister mine!"-

Margret, Margret.

## THE ROMAUNT OF MARGRET.

128

IT trembled on the grass,

With a low shadowy laughter!

The sounding river which rollëd ever,

Stood dumb and stagnant after.

"Brave knight thy brother is!

But better loveth he

Thy pourëd wine than chanted song;

And better both, than thee!"

Margret, Margret.

The ladye did not heed

The river's silence; while

Her own thoughts still ran at their will,

And calm was still her smile.

"My little sister wears

The look our mother wore!

I smooth her locks with a golden comb—

I bless her evermore!"

Margret, Margret.

"I gave her my first bird,

When first my voice it knew —

I made her share my posies rare,

And told her where they grew.

I taught her God's dear name —

God's worthy praise, to tell!

She looked from heaven into my face,

And said, I love thee well."

Margret, Margret.

IT trembled on the grass,

With a low shadowy laughter —

You could see each bird, as it woke and stared

Through the shrivelled tree-leaves, after!

"Fair child thy sister is!

But better loveth she

Thy golden comb than thy posied flowers —

And better both, than thee!"

Margret, Margret.

The ladye did not heed

The withering on the bough!

Still calm her smile, albeit the while

A little pale her brow.

" I have a father old,

The lord of ancient halls —

An hundred friends are in his court,

Yet only me he calls."

Margret, Margret.

"An hundred knights are in his court;
Yet read I by his knee:
And when forth they go to the tourney show,
I rise not up to see.

Tis a weary book to read—
My trysts at set of sun!—
But dear and loving 'neath the stars,
His blessing when I've done."

Margret, Margret.

IT trembled on the grass,

With a low shadowy laughter -

And moon and star, most bright and far.

Did shrink and darken after.

" High lord thy father is!

But better loveth he

His ancient halls than hundred friends;

His ancient halls than thee."

Margret, Margret.

The ladye did not heed

That the far stars did fail -

Still calm her smile, albeit the while-

Nay! - but she is not pale!

" I have a more than friend

Across the mountains dim!

No other's voice is soft to me,

Unless it nameth him!"

Margret, Margret.

"Though louder beats mine heart,
I know his tread again!

And his far plume aye, unless turned away,
For tears do blind me then.

We brake no gold, a sign
Of stronger faith to be;

But I wear his last look in my soul,
Which said, I love but thee!"

Margret, Margret.

IT trembled on the grass,

With a low shadowy laughter —

The wind did toll, as a passing soul

Were sped by church-bell, after!

And shadows, 'stead of light,

Fell from the stars above,

In flakes of darkness on her face

Still bright with trusting love!

Margret, Margret.

" He lovëd none but thee!

That love is transient too.

The wild hawk's bill doth dabble still

I' the mouth that vowed the true.

Will he open his dull eyes,

When tears fall on his brow?

Behold! the death-worm to his heart

Is a nearer thing than thou."

Margret, Margret.

Her face was on the ground —

None saw the agony!

But the men at sea did that night agree

They heard a drowning cry.

And when the morning brake,

Fast rolled the river's tide,

With the green trees waving overhead,

And a white corse lain beside.

Margret, Margret.

## 134 THE ROMAUNT OF MARGRET.

A knight's bloodhound and he

The funeral watch did keep —

With a thought o' the chase he stroked its face,

As it howled to see him weep.

A fair child kissed the dead,

But shrank before the cold.

And alone yet proudly in his hall

Did stand a baron old —

Margret, Margret.

Hang up my harp again —

I have no voice for song!

Not song but wail, and mourners pale

Not bards, to love belong!

O failing human love!

O light by darkness known!

O false, the while thou treadest earth!

O deaf, beneath the stone!

Margret, Margret.

Nay, friends! no name but His,

Whose name as Love appears!

Look up to heaven as God's forgiven,

And see it not for tears!

Yet see with spirit-sight

Th' eternal Friend undim,

Who died for love, and joins above

All friends who love in HIM—

And with His pierced hands may HE

The guardian of your clasped ones be—

Which prayer doth end my lay of thee,

Margret, Margret!

## ISOBEL'S CHILD.

—— so find we profit,
By losing of our prayers.

Shakspeare.

## ISOBEL'S CHILD.

To rest the weary nurse has gone;
An eight-day watch had she,
Rocking 'neath the sun and moon
The baby on her knee:
Till Isobel its mother said
"The fever waneth — wend to bed —
And mine the watch shall be."

Wearily the nurse did throw

Her pallet in the darkest place

Of that sick room, and dreamed.

And as the gusty wind did blow

The night-lamp's flame across her face,

In her dream the poplars seemed,

The tall dark poplars on the hill,

To clasp the sun in a weird constraint,

Till his rays dropped from him, pined and

still

As blossoms in frost; and he wanëd faint

To the colour of moonlight which doth pass

Over the dank ridged churchyard grass!—

The poplars held the sun, and he

The eyes of the nurse that they should not see,

Not for a moment, the babe on her knee,

Though she shuddered to feel that it grew too

chill

And lay too heavily! -

She only dreamed: for all the while 'Twas Lady Isobel that kept The little baby; and it slept Fast warm, as if its mother's smile,
Full of love's unmeted weight,
And red as rose of Harpocrate,
Dropt upon its eyelids, pressed
Lid to cheek in that sweet rest!—

And more and more smiled Isobel

To see the baby sleep so well —

She knew not that she smiled!

Against the lattice, dull and wild,

Drive the heavy droning drops,

Drop by drop, the sound being one —

As momently time's segments fall

On th' ear of God who hears through all,

Eternity's unbroken monotone! —

And more and more smiled Isobel

To see the baby sleep so well —

She knew not that she smiled! —

The wind in intermission stops

Down in the beachen wood —

Then crieth aloud self-stung, self-driven,

And riseth upward to its tops,

Dilating with a tempest-soul

Of gathered sound, the trees that break

Through their own outline with dark hands, and

roll

A shadow massive as a cloud,

Vocal as thunder-clouds in heaven,

Across the castle lake! —

And more and more smiled Isobel

To see the baby sleep so well —

She knew not that she smiled —

She knew not that the storm was wild.

Through that uproar she could not hear

The castle clock which struck anear —

She heard the low, light breathing of her child.

O sight for wondering look! —
While th' external nature broke
Into such abandonment —
While the very mist, heart-rent
By the lightning, and the shadow,
Shed distortedly above
Sloping hill and lake and meadow, —
Seemed as they all did move
Against nature, with a din —
A sense of silence seemed to come
From things without, and enter in
The human creature's room! —

So motionless she sate,

The babe asleep upon her knees, —

You might have dreamed their souls had
gone

Away to things inanimate,

To work in such, a life and moan;

And that their bodies had ta'en back
In mystic change, all silences
That cross the sky in cloudy rack,
Or haply dwell beneath the ground
In waters safe from their own sound!—

Only she wore

The deepening smile I named before —

And that a deepening love expressed —

And who at once can love and rest? —

In sooth the smile that then was keeping
Watch upon the baby sleeping,
Floated with its tender light
Downward from the droppëd eyes,
Upward from the lips apart,
Over cheeks which had grown white
With an eight-day weeping.
All smiles come in such a wise,
Where tears shall fall, or have of old —

Like northern lights that shoot athwart

The heavens, to token cold! ——

Motionless she sate!—
The hair had fallen by its weight
On either side the smile, and lay
Very blackly on the arm
Where the baby nestled warm!—
Pale as baby carved in stone
And seen by glimpses of the moon
In a dark cathedral aisle!—
But through the storm no moonbeam fell
Upon the child of Isobel—
I ween you saw it by the ray
Alone of her still smile.

'Tis aye a solemn thing to me

To look upon a babe that sleeps —

Wearing in its spirit-deeps
The unrevealed mystery
Of its Adam's taint and woe,
Which, when they revealed be,
Will not let it slumber so!
Lying new in life beneath
The shadow of the coming death,
With that soft low quiet breath,

As if it felt the sun! —

Knowing all things by their blooms,

Not their roots! — yea! — sun and sky,

Only by the warmth that comes

Out of each! — earth, only by

The pleasant hues that o'er it run! —

And human love, by drops of sweet

White nourishment still hanging round

The little mouth so slumber-bound! —

All which broken sentiency

Will gather and unite and climb

To an immortality

Good or evil, each sublime,

Through life and death to life again!—

O little lids, now closed fast!

Must ye learn to drop at last

Our large and burning tears?—

O warm quick body! must thou lie,

When is done the round of years,

Bare of all the joy and pain,

Dust in dust—thy place upgiving

To creeping worms in sentient living?—

O small frail being! wilt thou stand

At God's right hand,—

Lifting up those sleeping eyes,
Dilated by sublimest destinies,
In endless waking? Thrones and Seraphim,
Through the long ranks of their solemnities,

н 2

Sunning thee with calm looks of Heaven's surprise —

Thy look alone on Him?—

Or else, self-willed to the Godless place,
(God keep thy will!) feel thine own energies,
Cold, strong, objectless, like a dead man's clasp,
The sleepless deathless life within thee, grasp?
While myriad faces like one changeless face,
With woe not love's, shall glass thee everywhere,
And overcome thee with thine own despair?—

More soft, less solemn images

Drifted o'er the lady's heart,

Silently as snow!

She had seen eight days depart

Hour by hour, on bended knees,

With pale-wrung hands and prayings low

And broken — through which came the sound

Of tears that fell against the ground,

Making sad stops! "Dear Lord, dear Lord!"

She aye had prayed — (the heavenly word, Broken by an earthly sigh!)

Broken by an earthly sigh!)

"Thou, who didst not erst deny
The mother-joy to Mary mild
Blessëd in the blessëd child—
Hearkening in meek babyhood
Her cradle-hymn, albeit used
To all that music interfused
In breasts of angels high and good!
Oh, take not, Lord, my babe away—
Oh, take not to thy songful heaven,
The pretty baby thou hast given;
Or ere that I have seen him play
Around his father's knees, and known
That he knew how my love hath gone
From all the world to him!

From all the world to him!

And how that I shall shiver, dim

In the sunshine, thinking e'er

The grave-grass keeps it from his fair

Still cheeks! and feel at every tread

His little body which is dead

And hidden in the turfy fold,

Doth make the whole warm earth a'cold!

O God! I am so young, so young —

I am not used to tears at nights

Instead of slumber — nor to prayer

With shaken lips and hands out-wrung!

Thou knowest all my prayings were

'I bless thee, God, for past delights—

Thank God!' I am not used to bear

Hard thoughts of death! The earth doth

No face from me of friend or lover!

And must the first who teacheth me

The form of shrouds and funerals, be

Mine own first-born beloved? he

Who taught me first this mother-love?

Dear Lord, who spreadest out above
Thy loving piercëd hands to meet
All lifted hearts with blessing sweet,—
Pierce not my heart, my tender heart,
Thou madest tender! Thou who art
So happy in thy heaven alway,
Take not mine only bliss away!"

She so had prayed! And God, who hears
Through seraph-songs the sound of tears,
From that beloved babe had ta'en
The fever and the beating pain!
And more and more smiled Isobel
To see the baby sleep so well—
She knew not that she smiled!
Until the pleasant gradual thought
Which near her heart the smile enwrought
Soon strong enough her lips to reach,—

Now soft and slow, itself did seem

To float along a blessëd dream,

Beyond it, into speech! —

"I prayed for thee, my little child!
And God hath heard my prayer!
And when thy babyhood is gone,
We two together will kneel down
Upon His earth which will be fair
To both of us, not covering thee;
And give Him thankful praise."

The rain drives dull and wild! —
Against the lattice it drives!

" I thank Him now, that I can think
Of those same future days —
Nor from the harmless image shrink

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Of what I there might see —
Strange babies on their mothers' knee,
Whose innocent soft faces might
From off mine eyelids strike the light,
With looks not meant for me!"

A sound from sound outlives —

Know ye the wind from the rain? —

"But now together, baby mine,
We turn this hope of ours again
To suns 'neath which we shall entwine
Our spirits, and so teach each other
The blessed loves of child and mother!—
Two human loves make one divine!"

A sound from sound outlives — Know ye the rain from the thunder?—

н 5

"My little child, what wilt thou choose?
What gladness, from the gladnesses
Futurity is spreading under
Thy gladsome sight? Beneath the trees,
Wilt thou sit all day and lose
Thy spirit with the river, seen
Intermittently between
The winding beachen alleys?
Like a shepherd keeping sheep,
Thou, with only thoughts to keep
Which no bound will overpass—
And which are innocent as those
That feed upon the dewy grass
Among Arcadian valleys?"

The large white owl that with age is blind,

That hath sate for years in the old tree hollow,

Is carried away in a gust of wind!

His wings could bear him not as fast

As he goeth now the lattice past—

He is borne by the winds! the rains do follow!

His white wings to the blast out-flowing,

He hooteth in going, —

And in the lightnings, coldly glitter

His round unblinking eyes!

"Or, baby, wilt thou think it fitter
To be eloquent and wise?
One upon whose lips the air
Turns to solemn verities,
For men to breathe anew, and win
A deeper-seated life within?
Wilt be a philosopher,
By whose voice the earth and skies
Shall speak to the unborn?
Or a poet, broadly spreading
The golden immortalities

Of his own soul on natures lorn

And poor of such; them all to guard

From their decay? beneath his treading,

Earth's flowers being streaked by hues of Eden;

And stars, drawn downward by his looks

To shine more brightly in his books?"

The tame hawk in the castle-yard,

How it screams to the lightning, with its wet

Jagged plumes o'erhanging the parapet!

And at the lady's door the hound

Beateth with a crying sound!

"But, O my babe, thy lids are laid
Close, fast upon thy cheek!
And not a dream of power and sheen
Can make a passage up between —
Thy heart is of thy mother's made —
Thy looks are very meek!

And it will be their chosen place

To rest on some beloved face,

As these on thine — and let the noise

Of the whole world go on, nor mar

The tender silence of thy joys!

And when the silentnesses are

Too tender for themselves, the same

Yearning for sound — to look above,

And utter their one meaning, LOVE,—

That He may hear His name!"

No wind — no rain — no thunder!

The waters dropped not slowly —

The thunder was not spent —

The wind died not away! —

No wind — no rain — no thunder!

Their noises dropped asunder

From th' earth and firmament,

Abrupt and echoless,

As ripe fruits on the ground, unshaken wholly—
As life in death!

And like a stroke the sudden silentness
Sudden and solemn fell.

It startled the shut heart of Isobel,
As tempests could not, from its dreams!
Against the door doth pant the breath
O' the hound whose cry is still—
And she uplifts the lidded gleams
Of her clear eyes, and sees the moon
Looking out of heaven alone
Upon the poplared hill!

Seeming a calm of God, made visible
That men might find it fair!

The moonlight on the baby's face
Falleth clear and cold!
The mother's looks are falling there—
Because the beauty of the skies

Have not power long to hold

Our loving human eyes!

We still revert to this dark place,
And weep our natures into light!

The moonlight on the baby's face
Cold and clear remaineth!
The mother's looks do shrink away,
The mother's looks return to stay,
As charmed by what paineth.
Is it dream or is it sight?
Hath the change upon the wild
Elements, that signs the night,
Passed upon the child?
It is not dream, but sight!—

The babe hath awaked from sleep, And toward the gaze of its mother, Bent over it, turned another! Not the baby-looks that go
Unaimingly to and fro;
But an earnest gazing deep,
Such as soul gives soul at length,
When through work and wail of years,
It hath won a solemn strength,

And mourneth as it wears!

And a strong man could not brook

With a pulse unstirred by fears,

To meet that baby's look

O'erglazed by manhood's tears —

The tears of the man full grown,

With the power to wring our own,

(The silent power) that lie

In the eyes all undefiled

Of a little three months' child!

To see that babe-brow, wrought

By witnessings of thought!

And the small soft mouth unweened
(By mother's kiss o'erleaned
To put the sound of loving
Where no sound else was moving,
Except the speechless cry)
Carvëd to mind's expression,
Shaped to articulation —
Yea! speaking words — yea! naming woe
In tones that with it strangely went,
Because so baby-innocent!
The child spake to the mother so! —

"O mother, mother! loose thy prayer!

Christ's name hath made it strong!

It bindeth me, it holdeth me

With its most loving cruelty,

From floating my new soul along

The blessëd heavenly air!

It bindeth me, it holdeth me

In all this dark, upon this dull

Low earth, by only weepers trod!

It bindeth me, it holdeth me!

Mine angel looketh sorrowful

Upon the face of God.\*

"Mother, mother! can I dream
Beneath your earthly trees?
I had a vision and a gleam —
I heard a sound more sweet than these
When lifted by the wind!
Did you see the Dove with wings
Overdropt with glisterings
From a sunless light behind,
Falling on mine heart from sky,
Soft as mother's kiss, until
I seemed to leap, and yet was still?
Saw you how his love-large eye

For I say unto you that in Heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven.— Matt.ch. xviii. ver. 10.

Lookëd on me mystic calms, Until the power of his divine Vision was indrawn to mine?

" Oh! the dream within the dream! I saw celestial places even! Oh! the high and vista'd palms, Making finites of delight Through the heavenly infinite -Lifting up their green still tops To the heaven of Heaven! Oh! the sweet life-tree that drops Shade like light across the river Glorified in its for ever Flowing from the Throne! Oh! the shining holinesses Of the thousand, thousand faces God-sunned by the thronëd ONE! Overspread with such a love, That though I saw them turned above,

Each loving seemed for also me! And, oh! th' Unspeakable! the HE,-The manifest in secrecies, Yet of mine own heart partaker! With the overcoming look Of one who hath been once forsook, And blesseth the forsaker! Mother, mother, let me go Toward the face that looketh so! Through the mystic living Four Whose are inward outward eyes Dark with light of mysteries, And the restless evermore " Holy holy" - through the crowned Stately elders white around -Through the sworded Seraphim -

Suffer me to go to Him!

<sup>&</sup>quot; Is your wisdom very wise,

Mother, on the narrow earth? Very happy, very worth That I should stay to learn? Are these air-corrupting sighs Fashioned by unlearned breath? Do the students' lamps that burn All night, illumine death? Mother! albeit this be so, Loose thy prayer, and let me go Where that bright chief angel stands Apart from all his brother bands, Too glad for smiling! having bent In angelic wilderment O'er the depths of God, and brought Reeling, thence, one only thought To fill his whole eternity! He the teacher is for me! -He can teach what I would know -Mother, mother, let me go! -

Can your poet make an Eden No winter will undo? And light a starry fire, in heeding His hearth's is burning too? Drown in music, earthly din? -And keep his own wild soul within The law of his own harmony? -Mother! albeit this be so, Let me to mine Heaven go! A little harp me waits thereby -A harp whose strings are golden all, And tuned to music spherical, Hanging on the green life-tree, Where no willows ever be. Shall I miss that harp of mine? Mother, no! - the Eye divine Turned upon it, makes it shine -And when I touch it, poems sweet Like separate souls shall fly from it, Each to an immortal fytte!
We shall all be poets there,
Gazing on the chiefest Fair!

"And love! earth's love! and can we love
Fixedly where all things move?
Can the sinning love each other?
Mother, mother,
I tremble in thy close embrace—
I feel thy tears adown my face—
Thy prayers do keep me out of bliss—
Odrany contbly love!

O dreary earthly love!

Loose thy prayer, and let me go

To the place that loving is,

Yet not sad! and when is given

Escape to thee from this below,

Thou shalt see me that I wait

For thee at the happy gate;

And silence shall be up in heaven, To hear our meeting kiss!"

The nurse wakes in the morning sun,
And starts to see beside her bed,
The lady, with a grandeur spread
Like pathos, o'er her face! as one
God-satisfied and earth-undone!—

The babe upon her arm was dead!

And the nurse could utter forth no cry,—

She was awed by the calm in the mother's eye!

- " Wake, nurse!"-the lady said:
- " We are waking he and I —
  I, on earth, and he, in sky!
  And thou must help me to o'erlay
  With garment white, this little clay
  Which needs no more our lullaby.

- " I changed the cruel prayer I made,
  And bowed my meekened face, and prayed
  That God would do His will! and thus
  He did it, nurse! He parted us.
  His sun is showing on mine arm,
  The dead calm face!—and I am calm.
- "This earthly noise is too anear,

  Too loud, and will not let me hear

  The harp new-stricken! Death will soon

  Make silence!"——

And a sense of tune,
A satisfied love, meanwhile,
Most like the lost one's living smile,
Sang on within her soul!

Oh ye! Earth's tender-hearted! may ye be Made confident, to yield your love

To the so Named, who throned above
Shall all its ends fulfil:

Breaking the narrow prayers that may
Befit your narrow hearts, away
In His broad, loving will!

When thy light perisheth, That from thee issueth, Our life evanisheth.

TENNYSON.

They stand beneath the midnight,

Beside the river-sea,

Whose water sweepeth white around

The shadow of the tree.

The moon and earth are face to face,

And earth is trancëd deep:

The wave-voice seems the voice of dreams

That wander through her sleep.

The river floweth on the standard standard

What bring they 'neath the midnight,

Beside the river-sea?

They bring that human heart, wherein

No nightly calm can be, —

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That droppeth never with the wind,

Nor drieth with the dew —

Oh, calm it, God! Thy calm is broad

To cover spirits, too.

The river floweth on!

The maidens lean them over

The waters, side by side,

And shun each other's deepening eyes,

And gaze adown the tide:

And each within a little boat

A little lamp hath lit:

If bright it move, her loved doth love;

And love doth fail with it.

The river floweth on!

The stars are strong above us

To symbolize the soul;

Whereby a tempest-wind may rush,

Nor dim them as they roll!

And yet the soul, by instinct sad,

Reverts to symbols low—

To that small flame, whose very name,

Breathed o'er it, shakes it so.

The river floweth on!

Go, little boats, go softly,

And guard the symbol spark!

The little boats go soft and safe
Across the waters dark.

And Luti's eyes have caught the fire
They watch; and unawares,

That blessëd while, she lets a smile
Creep silent through her prayers!

The river floweth on!

The smile — where hath it wandered?—
She riseth from her knee;
She holds her dark, wet locks away —
There is no light to see!

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She cries a quick and bitter cry—
" Nuleeni, launch me thine!
We must have light abroad to-night,
For all the wreck of mine!"

The river floweth on!

"I do remember watching
Anear this river-bed,
When on my childish knee was laid
My dying father's head.\*
I turnëd mine, to keep the tears
From falling on his face—
What doth it prove, when Death and Love
Choose out the self-same place?"

The river floweth on!

" They say the dead are blessëd, The death-change here receiving.

<sup>\*</sup> The Hindoos carry their dying friends to the banks of the Ganges, believing in the after-blessedness of those who die there.

Who say — ah, me! — do any say

Where blessëd are the living?

Thy boat, Nuleeni! — look not sad —

Light up the waters rather!

I weep no faithless lover where

I wept a loving father!"

The river floweth on!

"My thought was his falsehood,
Ere my flame had waxëd dim:
And though I closed mine eyes to dream
That one last dream of him,
They shall not now be wet to see
The shining vision go—
From earth's cold love, I look above
To the holy house of snow."\*

The river floweth on!

I 5

The Hindoo heaven is localized on the summit of Mount Meru—one of the mountains of Himalaya or Himmeleh, which signifies,
 I believe, in Sanscrit, the abode of snow, winter, or coldness.

" Come thou — thou never knewest

A grief, that thou shouldst fear it —
Thou wearest still the happy look
That feels another's near it!
Thy humming-bird is in the sun,\*
Thy cuckoo in the grove;
And all the three broad worlds, for thee
Are full of wandering love."

The river floweth on!

The little maiden cometh —
She cometh shy and slow!

I ween she seeth through her lids,
They drop adown so low!

Her tresses near her small feet bare —
She stands, and speaketh nought;

Hamadeva, the Indian god of love, is imagined to wander through the three worlds, accompanied by the humming-bird, cuckoo, and gentle breezes.

Yet blusheth red, as if she said The name she only thought.

The river floweth on !

She kneeled by the water —
She lighted up the flame —
And o'er her youthful forehead's calm
The trembling radiance came.
Go, little boat; go, soft and safe,
And guard the symbol spark!
Soft, safe, doth float the little boat
Across the waters dark.

The river floweth on !

Glad tears her eyes have blinded —
The light they cannot reach —
She turneth with that sudden smile
She learnt before her speech.

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" I do not hear his voice! the tears

Have dimmed my light away!

But the symbol light will last to-night —

The love will last for aye."

The river floweth on!

Then Luti spake behind her —
Out spake she bitterly:

- " By the symbol light that lasts to-night,
  Wilt vow a vow to me?"
  She gazeth upward in her face —
  Soft answer maketh she:
- " By loves that last when lights are past,
  I vow that vow to thee!"

The river floweth on!

An earthly look had Luti,

Though her voice was deep as prayer—

"The rice is gathered from the plains

To cast upon thine hair. \*

And when he comes, his marriage-band

Around thy neck to throw;

Toward his gaze thy bride-smile raise,

And ask of — Luti's woe!"

The river floweth on!

"And when in seasons after,

Thy young bright-faced son

Shall lean against thy knee, and ask

What deeds his sire hath done;

Press deep adown thy mother-smile

Upon his ringlets long —

View deep his pretty childish eyes —

And tell of — Luti's wrong!"

The river floweth on!

The casting of rice upon the head, and the fixing of the band or tali about the neck, are parts of the Hindoo marriage ceremonial.

She lookëd up in wonder,
Yet softly answered she —

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- "By loves that last when lights are past,

  I vowed that vow to thee!

  But why glads it thee, that a bride-day be

  By a word of woe defiled?

  That a word of wrong take the cradle-song

  From the ear of a sinless child?"
- " Why!" Luti said, and she laughëd dread,—
  She laughëd low and wild —
- "That the fair new love may the bridegroom prove,

  And the father shame the child!"

The river floweth on !

"Thou flowest still, O river!

Thou flowest 'neath the moon —

Thy lily hath not changed a leaf, \*

Thy charmed lute a tune!

The Ganges is represented as a white woman, with a water lily in her right hand, and in her left a lute.

He mixed his voice with thine — and his

Was all I heard around!

But now, beside his chosen bride,

I hear the river's sound!"

The river floweth on !

"I gaze upon her beauty,
I feel her happy breathing:
The light above thy wave is hers—
My rest, alone beneath them.——
Oh! give me back the dying look
My father gave thy water!
Give back!— and let a little love
O'erwatch his weary daughter!"
The river floweth on!

"Give back!" she hath departed —
The word is wandering with her;
And the stricken maidens hear afar
The step and cry together.

O symbols! — none are frail enow

For mortal joys to borrow! —

While bright doth float Nuleeni's boat,

She weepeth, dark with sorrow.

The river floweth on!

## THE ISLAND.

Pleasing myself with phantasms sweet

Methinks the time runs very fleet.

Burton's Abstract of Melancholy.

All goeth but Goddis will.

ANON.

A BOON, O world, a boon of thee!

Now turn away thy face,

And loosen from thy clasp mine hand,

And let me dream a space!

A little space! mine after years

May pay thee all the price, in tears.

I crave it by thy forehead's crown,

Thine hand's concealed dart;

By the sweet honey of thy speech,

The fierce sting of thine heart—

Thy darksome palls from shining looms,

Thy mincing steps on hollow tombs—

Thy wreathëd frown of aconite,

Thy smile of poison worse —

Yea! by thy soft-toned benison

That curseth more than curse!

Fair world! my dream shall cease to be,

And I, have bitterer tears for thee!

My dream is of an island place

The distant seas are folding;

And over which, the only watch

Those troopëd stars are holding.

Those bright still stars! they need not seem Brighter or stiller in my dream!

Hills questioning the heavens for light—
Ravines too deep to scan!
As if the wild earth mimicked there
The wilder heart of man:
Only it shall be greener far
And gladder, than hearts ever are.

More like, perhaps, some mount sublime
Of starry paradise,
Disrupted to an hundred hills,
In falling from the skies —
Bringing within it, all the roots
Of heavenly trees, and flowers and fruits.

For saving where yon spectral heights Denude their rocky whiteness, Or ragged fissures, miser-like,

Hoard up some fountain brightness —

(And e'en in them — stoop down and hear —

Leaf sounds with water in your ear!)

Around, above, the plumëd trees

Their gracious shadows throw;

Through whose clear fruit and blossoming,

Whene'er the sun may go,

The ground beneath he deeply stains,

As shining through cathedral panes.

But little needs the ground beneath,

That shining from above her,

When many Pleiades of flowers

(Not one lost) star her over:

The rays of their unnumbered hues

Being refracted by the dews.

Wide-petalled plants, that boldly drink
Th' Amreeta of the sky;
Shut bells, all heavy with delight,
Whose faces earthward lie—
I cannot count them: but between,
Is room for grass, and mosses green,

And rapid brooks, that bear all hues
Reflected in disorder;
Or, gathering up their silver lengths
Beside their winding border,
Sleep, haunted through the slumber hidden,
By lilies white as dreams in Eden.

Nor think each archëd tree with each

Too closely interlaces,

T' admit of vistas opening broad,

And sweet sun-basking places,

Upon whose sward the antlered deer View their own image long and clear.

Unless they fainer would behold

That image on the seas,

Whene'er's a way through shelving rocks

And over-branching trees,

Whose doves from half-closed lids espy

The green and purple fish go by.

One mateless dove is answering

The water every minute,

Thinking such music could not be

Without his cooing in it!

So softly doth earth's beauty round

Infuse itself in ocean's sound.

My soul in love bounds forwarder

To meet the bounding waves!

Beside them is the home for me,

Within the coral caves —

And near me two or three may dwell

Whom dreams fantastic please as well.

High winding caverns! not uncleft
In all their sparry ceilings;
Through which may shine the earnest stars
In prophet-like revealings,
And down their slanted glory, move
Scents from the flowers that grow above.

I said that two or three might choose
Their caves beside mine own:
Those who would change the din of man,
For Nature's nobler tone—
Man's veering heart and careless eyes,
For Nature's stedfast sympathies.

And we to meet her faithfulness,
Shall play a faithful part:
Her beautiful shall ne'er surprise
The monstrous at our heart—
Her musical shall ever touch
Something within us also such.

Yet shall she not our mistress be,

As is the moon of ocean;

Though gently as the moon she give

Our thoughts a sheen and motion! —

More like a harp of many lays,

Moving its master while he plays.

\* \* \* \* \*

No sod in all that island hath

Been opened for the dead —

No island wind hath borne a sound

Of sorrow utterëd —

We cannot say by water clear

Or spreading tree — 'I suffered here.'

Our only 'farewell' shall be breathed
Toward the setting light,
When every star by day concealed,
Will make us welcome night:
Our only use of tears — t' express
The sense of too much happiness.

Our fancies shall their plumage take
From fairest island birds
That shine and dart from earth to heaven!
And then in turn, our words
Unconsciously shall take the dyes
Of those encolored fantasies.

Yea! soon, no consonant unsmooth
Our smile-tuned lips shall reach,

But softer than Hellenic sounds

Shall glide into our speech —

(What music did you ever find

So soft as voices glad and kind?)

And often by the joy without

And in us, overwrought,

We shall sit voicelessly, and read

Such poems in our thought

As Pindar might have writ, if he

Had tended sheep in Arcady!

Or Œschylus — the pleasant fields

He died in, longer knowing —

Or Homer, had he heard no tone

More loud than Meles flowing —

Or poet Plato, had th' undim

Unsetting Godlight broke on him!

Choose me the loftiest cave of all,

To make a place for prayer;

And I will choose a praying voice

To pour our spirits there.

How silverly the echoes run—

Thy will be done—thy will be done!

Gently yet strangely uttered words! —
They lift me from my dream.

It perisheth — the island place
That did no more than seem!

The streams are dry, no sun could find —
The fruits are fallen, without wind! —

So oft the doing of God's will
Our foolish wills undoeth!
Yet softly breaks an idle dream
The morning light subdueth;

K 2

And happier 'tis, to see the sun, Than sleep, and dream a brighter one.

Perchance my happy island dream

Was made of foolishness!

Why every thought of earthly joy

Is foolish, not the less;

Our thoughts being stained! Lord, with THEE

Were innocence and agony!

Shall I go backward to the World,
When Thou art very nigh?

And pay the price I promised her
For vision passëd by,
What time Thy covenant's controul
Would break all others from my soul?—

Nay! I endure: but not because

The World imposeth woe;

But rather that Thine hands perform

The thing appointed so!\*

Those kindly wounding hands did brave,

Themselves, a deeper wound—to save.

We must endure — but not because

The World imposeth woe.

Prayers hold a better power than dreams

And leave her far and low:

We cannot meet her cruel eyes,

When ours are lifted to the skies—

When ours are lifted to the cross,

The love-in-sorrow reading!

Lord! teach thy will beside thy cross;

That while our hearts are bleeding,

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;He performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with Him."—Job, chap. xxii. ver. 15.

The droppings of thy blood may fall Still faster on them, soothing all!

That when thy lips, grown pale for us,

Have taught we dream in vain

Of happiness beneath a sun

Which darkened with Thy pain,—

They still may tell us, "You shall be

Anon in Paradise with Me."

# THE DESERTED GARDEN.

Since that I saw this gardine wasted—

Spenser.

I MIND me in the days departed,

How often underneath the sun,

With childish bounds I used to run

To a garden long deserted.

ſ

The beds and walks were vanished quite;

And wheresoe'er had fallen the spade,

The greenest grasses Nature led,

To sanctify her right.

I called it my wilderness,

For no one entered there but I.

The sheep looked in, the grass t' espy,

And passed ne'ertheless.

The trees were interwoven wild,

And spread their boughs enough about

To keep both sheep and shepherd out,

But not a happy child.

Adventurous joy it was for me!

I crept beneath the boughs, and found
A circle smooth of mossy ground
Beneath a poplar tree.

Old garden rose-trees hedged it in— Bedropt with roses waxen-white, Well satisfied with dew and light, And careless to be seen. Long years ago it might befall,

When all the garden flowers were trim,

The grave old gardener prided him

On these the most of all;

And Lady stately overmuch,

Who movëd with a silken noise,

Blushed near them, dreaming of the voice

That likened her to such!

And these to make a diadem,

She may have often plucked and twined;

Half smiling as it came to mind,

That few would look at them.

Oh! little thought that Lady proud,

A child would watch her fair white rose,

When buried lay her whiter brows,

And silk was changed for shroud!—

к 5

Nor thought that gardener, full of scorns

For men unlearn'd and simple phrase,

A child would bring it all its praise,

By creeping through the thorns!

To me upon my low moss seat,

Though never a dream the roses sent

Of science or love's compliment,

I ween they smelt as sweet.

Nor ever a grief was mine, to see

The trace of human step departed —

Because the garden was deserted,

The blyther place for me!

Friends, blame me not! a narrow ken

Hath childhood twixt the sun and sward!

We draw the moral afterward —

We feel the gladness then!

And gladdest hours for me did glide
In silence at the rose-tree wall:
A thrush made gladness musical
Upon the other side.

Nor he nor I did e'er incline

To mar or pluck the blossoms white —

How should I know but that they might

Lead lives as glad as mine?

To make my hermit-home complete,

I brought clear water from the spring

Praised in its own low murmuring,—

And cresses glossy wet.

And so, I thought my likeness grew
(Without the melancholy tale)
To gentle hermit of the dale,
And Angelina too!

For oft I read within my nook
Such minstrel stories! till the breeze
Made sounds poetic in the trees,—
And then I shut the book.

If I shut this wherein I write,

I hear no more the wind athwart

Those trees! — nor feel that childish heart

Delighting in delight!

My childhood from my life is parted;

My footstep from the moss which drew

Its fairy circle round: anew

The garden is deserted!

Another thrush may there rehearse

The madrigals which sweetest are —

No more for me! — myself afar

Do sing a sadder verse! —

Ah me! ah me! when erst I lay

In that child's-nest so greenly wrought,

I laughëd to myself and thought

'The time will pass away!'

I laughëd still, and did not fear
But that, whene'er was past away
The childish time, some happier play
My womanhood would cheer.

I knew the time would pass away —
And yet beside the rose-tree wall,
Dear God! — how seldom, if at all,
I lookëd up to pray! —

The time is past!—and now that grows

The cypress high among the trees,

And I behold white sepulchres

As well as the white rose—

When wiser, meeker thoughts are given,—
And I have learnt to lift my face,
Remembering earth's greenest place
The colour draws from heaven—

It something saith for earthly pain,
But more for Heavenly promise free,
That I who was, would shrink to be
That happy child again!

# THE SOUL'S TRAVELLING.

— Procul urbano strepitu, secessibus altis,
— jucunda per otia ripæ. —

MILTON.

Ηδη νοερους Πετασαι ταρσους.

SYNESIUS.

I DWELL amid the city.

The great humanity which beats
Its life along the stony streets,
Like a strong unsunned river
In a self-made course, is ever
Rolling on, rolling on!—

I sit and hear it as it rolls,

That flow of souls!

The infinite tendencies,

In the finite, chafed and pent,—

In the finite, turbulent!—

The long drear monotone,

Made of many tones that rise

Each to each as contraries!—

The rich man's ambling steeds —

Lolling their necks as the chariot comes

With its inward gleam of the eddying plumes!—

The poor man's abject needs —

The feet that wearily, wearily roam,

Unquickened by thoughts of the fire at home —

The cry of the babe unheard of its mother,

Though it lie on her breast, while she thinks of
the other

Laid yesterday in tomb! -

The whine of voices that have made

Their own grief's sacredness a trade —

The curse that ringeth hollowly

The crime against the misery —

The haggling talk — the organ's grinding —

The grinder's face being o'er it leant,

Most vacant even of woe,-

While the children's hearts leap so

At the merry music's winding!—

The rapid pace of the business-men

Whose eyes do glitter cold,

As still they saw the gold! -

The funeral's long slow train

Plumëd black, beside

Many a house where the rioters laugh

And count the beakers they shall quaff

At the morrow's festivals —

Many a house where sits a bride Trying the morrow's coronals, With a red blush, ev'n to-day!—
Slowly creep the funerals,—
As none should hear the noise and say,
The living, the living, must go away
To multiply the dead!
Hark! an upward shout is sent!
In grave strong joy from tower to steeple

The bells ring out —

The trumpets sound, the people shout,

The young Queen goes to her parliament!—

She turneth round her large blue eyes,

More bright with childish memories

Than royal hopes, upon the people —

On either side she bows her head

Lowly, with a Queenly grace,

And smile most trusting-innocent,

As if she smilëd to her mother!

The thousands press before each other

To bless her to her face —

And booms the deep majestic voice

Through trump and drum — " May the Queen rejoice

In the people's liberties!"-

I dwell amid the city,

And hear the flow of souls!

I do not hear the several contraries —

I do not hear the separate tone that rolls

In act or speech,

For pomp or trade, for merrymake or folly—

I hear the confluence and sum of each,

And that is melancholy!—

Thy voice is a complaint, O crownëd city,

The blue sky covering thee, like God's great
pity!—

O blue sky! it mindeth me
Of places where I used to see

Its vast unbroken circle thrown
From the far pale-peakëd hill
To the last verge of the ocean —
As by God's arm it were done
Then first, or as it felt th' emotion
Of that first impulse on it still! —
Oh, we spirits fly at will;
Faster than the wingëd steed
Whereof in old book is read,
With the sunlight foaming back
From him to a misty track,
And his nostril reddening proud
As he breasteth the steep thundercloud!
Smoother than Sabrina's chair \*
Gliding up from wave to air,

<sup>\*</sup> There is a gentle nymph not far from hence
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream:
Sabrina is her name

Made goddess of the river; still she retains
Her maiden gentleness.— Comus.

While she smileth debonair

Yet holy, coldly and yet brightly,

Like her own mooned waters nightly,

Through her dripping hair!—

Very fast and smooth we fly,

Spirits, though the flesh be by.

All looks feed not from the eye,

Nor all hearings from the ear:

We can hearken and espy

Without either! we can journey,

Bold and gay, as knight to tourney;

And though we wear no visor down

To dark our countenance, the foe

Shall never chafe us as we go.

I am gone from peopled town!

It passeth its street-thunder round

My body; wakening not to sound —

Its palace splendour, gloom of prison
And mart-throng; wakening not to vision!
For now another sound, another
Vision, my soul's senses have.
O'er a hundred valleys deep,
Where the hills' tall shadows sleep,—
Scarce known because the valley trees
Cross their mountain images —
O'er a hundred hills, each other
Watching to the western wave —
I have travelled, — I have found
The silent, lone, remembered ground.

I have found a hollow green,
From the hill-top, which doth lean
Toward the sea, — as if the hill
Had dropt his brow in reverence
Of the grandeur seen from thence —
A little nook, the cloud would fill

Which sometimes lieth by the moon
To beautify a night of June—
A nook that openeth unto
The glorious ocean's stedfast view;
Being most closely shut from all
Its kindred earth's sweet pastoral!—
And yet its banks (too smooth and steep
To be o'erbrowzëd by the sheep)
Withal are slanted very greenly;
And flowers and grasses so serenely
Grow up them, that I ween the sea
Whereunto their dewed faces be,
Doth serve them for another sky,
As warm and blue as that on high!—

And in this hollow is a seat;

And when that you have crept to it,

Slow adown the banks that are

Fashioning that quaintest chair —

Do not think - though at your feet The cliff disrupts - you shall behold The line where earth and ocean meet. You can hear them as they greet! You can hear that evermore Distance-softened noise, more old Than Nereid's singing - the wave leant And joining soft uptill the shore In harmony of discontent! -Nathless you sit too high to gaze Save on each several element — On earth, that nearly round you lays Green guardianship - and ocean broad To the next side o' the world o'erflowed: Earth, ocean - seeming as they were Each one a separate hemisphere, Scarce more than earth and sky, anear! But when you hearken to the grave Lamenting of the underwave,

You must believe in their communion, Albeit you witness not their union!

Except that sound, the place is full
Of silences, which when you cull
By utterance, it thrills you so
That presently you let them grow
As long and deep as thought, and roll
With a soul's strength above your soul!
And as they touch your soul, they borrow
As of its grandeur, of its sorrow,
That deathly odour which the clay
Leaves on its deathlessness alway.

Alway! alway! must this be?
Rapid Soul from city gone,
Dost thou carry inwardly
What doth make the city's moan?
Must this deep sigh of thine own

L

Haunt thee with humanity?

Green-visioned banks that are too steep
To be o'erbrowzëd by the sheep,
May all sad thoughts adown you creep
Without a shepherd? — Mighty sea,
Can we dwarf thy magnitude,
And fit it to our straightest mood? —
O fair, fair Nature! are we thus
Impotent and querulous
Among thy workings glorious,—
Among thy fulnesses, that still
Leave us vacant and defiled,
And wailing like a kissëd child,
Kissëd soft against his will?

God, God! —
With a child's voice I cry,
Weak, sad, confidingly —
God, God!

Thou knowest eyelids raised not always up Toward Thy love (as none of ours are) droop,

As ours, o'er many a tear! —
Thou knowest, though Thy universe is broad,
Two little tears suffice to cover all! —
Thou knowest — Thou, who art so prodigal
Of beauty — we are oft but stricken deer,
Expiring in the woods — that care for none
Of those delightsome flowers they die upon!

- O blissful mouth, which breathed the mournful breath
- We name our souls! (self-spoilt!) by that strong passion
- Which paled thee once with sighs by that strong death
- Which made thee once unbreathing from the wrack,
- Themselves have called around them, call them back L 2



Toward thee in continuous aspiration!—
For here, O Lord,

For here they travel vainly; vainly pass
From city pavement to untrodden sward,
Where the lark finds her deep nest in the grass
Unswept of its last dew! — Yea, very vain
The greatest speed of all these souls of men,
Unless they travel upward to Thy Throne!
There sittest Thou, the satisfying One,
With blood for sins, and holy perfectings
For all requirements — while th' archangel,
raising

Toward Thy face his full ecstatic gazing, Forgets the rush and rapture of his wings!

## SOUNDS.

Hкои $\sigma$ as  $\eta$  оик  $\eta$ кои $\sigma$ as; —— Eschylus.

HEARKEN, hearken!

The rapid river carrieth

Many noises underneath

The hoary ocean!

Teaching his solemnity,

Sounds of inland life and glee,

Learnt beside the waving tree,

When the winds in summer prank

Toss the shades from bank to bank,

And the quick rains, in emotion Rather gladdening than it grieves, Count and visibly rehearse The pulses of the universe Upon the summer leaves -Learnt among the lilies straight, When they bow them to the weight Of many bees, whose hidden hum Seemeth from themselves to come -Learnt among the grasses green, Where the rustling mice are seen, By the gleaming, as they run, Of their quick eyes in the sun; And lazy sheep are browzing through, With their noses trailed in dew: And the squirrel leaps adown, Holding fast the filbert brown; And the lark, with more of mirth In his song than suiteth earth,

Droppeth some in soaring high,

To pour the rest out in the sky:

While the woodland doves, apart

In the copse's leafy heart,

Solitary not ascetic,

Hidden and yet vocal, seem

Joining in a lovely psalm,

Man's despondence, nature's calm,

Half mystical and half pathetic,

Like a sighing in a dream —\*

 In the beautiful volume of poetry just published by Mr. Kenyon, I observe the following stanza:—

"While floating up bright forms ideal,
Mistress, or friend, around me stream;
Half sense-supplied, and half unreal,
Like music mingling with a dream."

And as some time ago the pleasure was permitted to me of seeing in MS. the little poem ("Reverie") in which it occurs, I do not doubt that the "music" of its two concluding lines mingled, though very unconsciously, with my "dream," and gave their own form and pressure to the above distich. The ideas, however, being sufficiently distinct, I am satisfied with sending this note to the press after my verses, and with acknowledging another obligation to the valued friend to whom I already owe so many.

All these sounds the river telleth,
Softened to an undertone,
Which ever and anon he swelleth
By a burden of his own,
In the ocean's ear.
Ay! and ocean seems to hear,
With an inward gentle scorn,
Smiling to his caverns worn.—

Hearken, hearken!

The child is shouting at his play

Just in the tramping funeral's way;

And the widow moans as she turns aside

To shun the face of the gladsome bride —

And, shaking the tower of the ancient church,

The marriage bells do swing;

And in the shadow of the porch

An idiot sits, with his lean hands full

Of hedgerow flowers and a poet's skull,

Laughing loud and gibbering, Because it is so brown a thing, While he sticketh the gaudy poppies red In and out the senseless head, Where all sweet fancies grew instead! And you may hear, at the self-same time, Another poet who reads his rhyme, Low as a brook in the summer air, -Save when he droppeth his voice adown, To dream of the amaranthine crown His mortal brows shall wear! And a baby cries with a feeble sound 'Neath the weary weight of the life new-found; And an old man groans, - with his testament Only half signed, - for the life that's spent; And lovers twain do softly say, As they sit on a grave, "for aye, for aye!" And foemen twain, while Earth, their mother, Looks greenly upward, curse each other!

L 5

A school-boy drones his task, with een Cast over the book to the meadows green A lonely student cries aloud, Eureka! clasping at his shroud; A beldame's age-cracked voice doth sing To a little infant slumbering; A maid forgotten weeps alone, Muffling her sobs on the trysting stone; A sick man wakes at his proper wail; A gossip nods to her thrice told tale; A haggard gamester shakes the dice; A reaper blesseth the sunny skies, And a murderer doth beneath them sit, Staring on earth in a muttering fit! And beside the awful dead, the living Low speech and hushëd steps are giving, Because he cannot hear, -And he who on that narrow bier

Hath room enow, is closely wound In a silence piercing more than sound.

Hearken, hearken!

God speaketh to thy soul —
Using the supreme voice which doth confound
All life with consciousness of Deity,

All senses into one -

As erst in Patmos, Apolyptic John,

For whom did backward roll

The cloud-gate of the future, turned to see

The Voice which spake. It speaketh now -

Through the breathings of the calm creation,

Through the moans of the creature's desolation,

Striking, and in its stroke, resembling

The memory of a solemn vow,

Which pierceth the din of a festival

To one in the midst, - and he letteth fall

The cup, with a sudden trembling!

Hearken, hearken!

God speaketh in thy soul!

Saying, "O thou that movest

With feeble paces o'er this earth of mine,

To break beside the fount thy golden bowl\*

Filled with salt tears from out thy mournful eyne,—

Direct them upward to my heaven, and see

My right hand hold thine immortality

In an eternal grasping! Thou that lovest

The songful birds and grasses underfoot,

And eke what tombs shall hide and change pollute—

I am the end of love!— give love to me!

O thou that sinnest, grace doth more abound

Than all thy sin! sit still beneath my rood,

And count the droppings of my victim blood,

And seek none other sound!"

<sup>\*</sup> Ecclesiastes, chap. xii. ver. 6.

Hearken, hearken!

Shall we hear the lapsing river

And our brother's sighing, ever,

And not the voice of God?—

## NIGHT AND THE MERRY MAN.

The " moon - I scarcely know why - always seems to speak to me of the past."

MRS. HEMANS' LETTERS.

#### NIGHT.

'NEATH my moon what doest thou,
With a somewhat paler brow
Than she giveth to the ocean?
He without a pulse or motion,
Muttering low before her stands,
Lifting his invoking hands,

### NIGHT AND THE MERRY MAN.

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Like a seer before a sprite,

To catch her oracles of light.

But thy soul out-trembleth now

Many pulses on thy brow!

Where be all thy laughters clear,

Others laughëd but to hear?

Where thy quaint jests, said for fames?

Where thy dances, turned to games?

Where thy buxom companies,

Moonëd o'er with ladies' eyes,

All more bright for thee, I trow?

'Neath my moon, what doest thou?

#### THE MERRY MAN.

I am digging my warm heart,
Till I find its coldest part.
I am digging wide and low,
Deeper than a spade will go:

Till that, when a pit is shaped

Large enow, there shall be heaped

Therein, present pain and past

Joys, dead things that look aghast

By the daylight — now 'tis done!

Throw them in, by one and one!

I must laugh, at rising sun! —

Memories — of fancy's golden
Treasures which my hands have holden
Till their chillness made them ache;
Of childhood's hopes, that used to wake
If birds were in a singing strain,
And for less cause, sleep again;
Of the moss seat in the wood,
Where I trysted solitude;
Of the hill top, where the wind
Used to follow me behind,
Then in sudden rush to blind

#### NIGHT AND THE MERRY MAN.

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Both my glad eyes with my hair, Made the gladder for the snare! Of the cawing of the rooks -Of the dreaming 'neath the oaks, Which retain beneath them now Only - shadow of the bough: Of the lying on the grass While the clouds did overpass, -Only they, so lightly driven, Seeming between me and Heaven! Of the little prayers serene, Murmuring of earth and sin! Of large-leaved philosophy, Leaning from my childish knee; Of poetic book sublime, Soul-kissed for the first dear time, -Greek or English! - ere I knew Life was not a poem too !-

Throw them in, by one and one!

I must laugh, at rising sun.

Of the glorious ambitions,
Yet unquenched by their fruitions;
Of the labouring at nights,
Sweet as slumber's lost delights;
Of achievements less descried
By a dear few, than magnified!
Of praises from the many earned,
When praise from love was undiscerned;
Of the sweet reflecting gladness,
Softened by itself to sadness!—
Throw them in, by one and one!
I must laugh, at rising sun!—

What are these? more, more than these!

Throw in, dearer memories!—

Of voices - whereof but to speak, Maketh mine all sunk and weak -Of smiles, the thought of which is sweeping All my soul to floods of weeping; Of looks, whose absence fain would weigh My own looks to the ground for aye: Of clasping hands - ah me! I wring Mine! and in a trembling fling Downward, every passioned paining! Partings, with the sting remaining -Meetings, with a deeper throe, Since the joy is altered so; Changes, with a fiery burning -(Shadows upon all the turning!) Thoughts of - with a storm they came -Them I have not breath to name! Downward, downward, be they cast In the pit! and now at last

My work beneath the moon is done, And I shall laugh, at rising sun!

But let me pause or ere I cover
All my spoilings darkly over.
I will speak not in thine ears,
Only tell my beaded tears
Silently, most silently! —
When the last is calmly told,
Let that same moist rosary,
With the rest sepulchred be!
Finishëd! The darksome mould
Sealeth up the darksome pit!
I will lay no stone on it.
Grasses I will sow instead,
Fit for Queen Titania's tread;
Flowers encoloured with the sun,
And au au written upon none!—

### 238 NIGHT AND THE MERRY MAN.

Thus, whenever saileth by

The Ladye World of dainty eye,

Not a grief shall here remain,

Silken shoon to damp or stain:

And while she lisps — "I have not seen

Any place more smooth and clean"—

Here she cometh! — Ha, ha! — who

Laugheth loud as I can do?

## EARTH AND HER PRAISERS.

Αυτη σοι εις ήμετεραν δυναμιν ότι καλλιστη και αριστη δεδοται τε και εκτετισται παλινώδια.  $P_{\rm LATO}$ .

The Earth is old;
Six thousand winters make her heart a-cold—
The sceptre slanteth from her palsied hold.
She saith, "'Las me!—God's word that I was good
Is taken back to heaven,
From whence when any sound comes, I am riven
By some sharp bolt. And now no angel would

Descend with sweet dew silence on my mountains,
To glorify the rivers and the fountains

That gush along their side.

I see, O weary change! I see instead

This human mournful pride,

These thrones and tombs, this tearfulness and blood;

And bitter words are poured upon mine head-

' O Earth! thou art a stage for tricks unholy,

A church for all remorseful melancholy!

Thou art so spoilt, we should forget we had

An Eden in thee, - wert thou not so sad.'

Sweet children, I am old! ye, every one,

Do keep me from a portion of my sun —

Give praise in change for brightness!

That I may shake my hills in infiniteness

Of breezy laughter, as in youthful mirth,

To hear Earth's sons and daughters praising

Earth!"

Whereupon a child began,
With spirit running up to man,
As by angel's shining ladder,
(May he find no cloud above!)
Seeming he had ne'er been sadder
All his days than now—
Sitting in the chesnut grove,
With that joyous overflow
Of smiling from his mouth, o'er brow
And cheek and chin, as if the breeze
Leaning tricksy from the trees
To part his golden hairs, had blown
Into an hundred smiles that one.

" O rare, rare Earth!" he saith,

" I will praise thee presently;

Not to-day; I have not breath!

I have chasëd squirrels three—

Two ran down in the furzy hollow,

#### EARTH AND HER PRAISERS.

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Where I could not see or follow;

One sits at the top of the alder tree,

With a yellow nut, and a mock at me!

Presently, presently—

When I see which way those two have run,
And can hunt them weariless in the sun;
When the mocking one at the alder top
Shall leap a-down, and beside me stop;
Then, rare Earth! rare Earth!

Will I pause in all my mirth,
To say all good of thee!"

Next a lover, with a dream
'Neath his waking eyelids hidden;
And a frequent sigh unbidden;
And an idlesse all the day,
Beside a wandering stream;
And a silence that is made
Of a word he dares not say,
Shakes slow his pensive head.

"Earth, Earth!" saith he,

"If spirits, like thy roses, grew
On one stalk; and winds severer
Could but only blow them nearer,
To share each other's dew —

If, when all thy summers be
Verduring the hills, I knew,
Looking off them, I might see
Something beauteous too —
Then Earth," saith he,

"I would praise—nay, nay—not thee!"

Will the pedant name her next?

Crabbëd with a crabbëd text,

Sits he in his study nook,

With his elbow on a book;

And his stately crossed knees,

And a wrinkle deeply thrid

Through his dropped brow,—

M 2

Caused by making proofs enow,
That Plato in "Parmenides"
Meant the same Spinosa did;
Or, that an hundred men, like him
Himself had made one Homer,
Homeros being a misnomer.\*
What hath he to do with praise
Of Earth, or aught? whene'er the sloping
Sunbeams through his window, dim
To his cold eyes the learned prose,
Straight he draws the curtain close.

\* That Plato's high spiritual meanings should ever be confounded with Spinosa's low materialisms, and Homer's individuality lost among the narrow spirits of the Rhapsodists, are proofs enough, (were any such needed in a universe which has itself been mistaken for its Deity,) that no human errors are too wonderful to be possible. With regard to the Homeric speculation, Proclus, in his Chrestomathia, derives the name of Homer from blindness. At least he says that the Æolians did so—observing besides, τους γαρ τυφλους ὑπο των Αιολεων ὑμηρους καλεισθαι. This derivation, which more than ever unfits the name for a body corporate of poets, may yet console certain critics by appropriating it to themselves.

May abstraction keep him dumb!
Were his thin dry lips to open,
"Derivatum est" would come.

Then, a mourner moveth pale

In a silence full of wail,

Raising not his sunken head,

Because he walkëd last that way,

With that one beneath the clay:

Weeping not, because that one,

The only one who would have said,

"Cease to weep, beloved!" had gone

Whence returneth comfort none.

The silence breaketh suddenly,—

"Earth, I praise thee!" crieth he:

"Thou hast a grave for also me."

Ha, a poet! know him by The ecstasy-dilated eye, Not uncharged with tears that ran
Upward from his heart of man;
By the cheek, from hour to hour,
Kindled bright, or sunken wan,
With a sense of lonely power;
By the brow uplifted higher
Than others, for more low declining;
By the lip, which words of fire
Overflowing burned white,
While they gave the nations light!
Ay, in every time or place
Ye may know the poet's face
By the shade or shining.

'Neath a golden cloud he stands,

Spreading his impassioned hands.

"O God's Earth!" he saith, "the sign

From the Father-soul to mine

Of all beauteous mysteries, Of all perfect images Which, divine in His divine, In my human only are Very excellent and fair; And in thy matter, almost nought, If not suggestive unto thought! Think not, Earth, that I would raise Weary forehead in thy praise, (Weary, that I cannot go Farther from thy region low,) If were struck no richer meanings From thee than thyself. The leanings Of the close trees o'er the brim Of a sunshine-haunted stream, Have a sound beneath their leaves, Not of wind, not of wind, Which the poet's voice achieves! The faint mountains heaped behind,

Have a falling on their tops, Not of dew, not of dew, Which the poet's fancy drops! Viewless things his eyes can view; Driftings of his dream do light All the skies by day and night; And the seas that deepest roll, Carry murmurs of his soul. Earth, I praise thee! praise thou me! God perfecteth his creation With this recipient poet-passion, And makes the beautiful to be. I praise thee, O beloved sign, From the God-soul unto mine! Praise me, that I cast on thee The cunning sweet interpretation, The help and glory and dilation Of mine immortality!"



There was silence. None did dare
To use again the spoken air
Of that far-charming voice, until
A Christian resting on the hill,
With a thoughtful smile subdued
(Seeming learnt in solitude)
Which a weeper might have viewed
Without new tears, did softly say,
And lookëd up to heaven alway,
While he praisëd Earth —

" O Earth!

I count the praises thou art worth,
By thy waves that move aloud,
By thy hills toward the cloud,
By thy valleys low and green,
By the copses' trees between;
By their birds which, like a soul
Scattered, in a great delight,

M 5

Into fragments musical,
Stir and sing in every bush;
By thy silver founts that fall,
As to 'tice the stars at night
To thine heart; by grass and rush,
And little weeds the children pull,
Mistook for flowers!

"Oh, beautiful
Art thou, Earth! albeit worse
Than in heaven is called good;
Good to us, that we may know
Meekly from thy good to go;
While the holy crying blood
Puts its music kind and low,
'Twixt such ears as are not dull,
And thine ancient curse!

" Praisëd be the mosses soft In thy pathways very oft; And the thorns, which make us think Of the thornless river-brink,

Where the heavenly tread!

Praisëd be thy sunny gleams,

And the storm, that worketh dreams

Of calm unfinished!

Praised be thy cheerful days,

And thy night-time's solemn need,

When by household faggot's blaze,

In God's dear book we read

No night shall be therein!

Praisëd be thy dwellings warm,

Where, to hear of pardoned sin,

Pauseth oft the merry din,—

Save the babe's upon the arm,

Who croweth,— learning his first mirth

And laughter from the crackling hearth!

Yea,— be praised thy dwellings cold,

Underneath the church-yard mould;

Where the bodies of the saints,
Separate from earthly taints,
Lie a-down, in blessing bound,
Waiting for the trumpet's sound
To free them into blessing!—none
Weepeth more beneath the sun,
Albeit words of human love
Be graven very near, above!

"Earth, let Christians praise thee thus!

Even for the change that comes,

With a grief, from thee to us!

For the pleasant food and wine,

And summer green; and also for

The frost upon the sycamore,

And hail upon the vine!\*

For thy place of tombs!

But the praise that best shall win thee,

Is—to praise thy Maker in thee!".

Psalm lxxviii, 47.

# THE VIRGIN MARY TO THE CHILD JESUS.

But see the Virgin blest
Hath laid her babe to rest.
Milton's Hymn on the Nativity.

SLEEP, sleep, mine Holy One!

My flesh, my Lord! — what name? I do not know

A name that seemeth not too high or low;

Too far from me, or Heaven.

My Jesus! that is best: that word being given By the majestic angel, whose command

Was softly as a man's beseeching said,

When I and all the earth appeared to stand

In the great overflow

Of light celestial from his wings and head.

Sleep, sleep, my saving One!

And art Thou come for saving, baby-browed

And speechless Being — art Thou come for saving

The palm that grows beside our door is bowed

By treadings of the low wind from the south,

A restless shadow through the chamber waving —

Upon its bough a bird sings in the sun: —

But Thou with that close slumber on thy mouth,

Dost seem of wind and sun already weary —

Art come for saving, O my weary One?

Perchance this sleep that shutteth out the dreary

Earth-sounds and motions, opens on Thy soul

High dreams on fire with God;

High songs that make the pathways where they roll

More bright than stars do theirs; and visions new Of Thine eternal Nature's old abode!

Suffer this mother's kiss,

Best thing that earthly is,

To glide the music and the glory through;

Nor narrow in Thy dream the broad upliftings

Of any seraph wing!

Thus, noiseless, thus! Sleep, sleep, my dreaming
One!

The slumber of His lips meseems to run
Through my lips to mine heart; to all its shiftings
Of sensual life, bringing contrariousness
In a great calm! I feel, I could lie down
As Moses did, and die,\*—and then live most.

[She pauses.]

I am 'ware of you, heavenly Presences,

That stand with your peculiar light unlost,—

<sup>\*</sup> It is a Jewish tradition that Moses died of the kisses of God's lips.

Each forehead with a high thought for a crown,
Unsunned i' the sunshine! I am 'ware. Ye throw
No shade against the wall! How motionless
Ye round me with your living statuary!
While through your whiteness, in and outwardly,
Continual thoughts of God appear to go,
Like light's soul in itself! I bear, I bear,
To look upon the dropped lids of your eyes,
Albeit their outward shining testifies
To that beatitude within, which were
Enough to blast an eagle at his sun!
I fall not on my sad clay face before ye;

I look on His! I know

My spirit which dilateth with the woe
Of His mortality,

May well contain your glory!

Yea, drop your lids more low,—

Ye are but fellow-worshippers with me!

Sleep, sleep, my worshipped One!

We sate among the stalls at Bethlehem.

The dumb kine from their fodder turnëd them,

Softening their hornëd faces

To almost human gazes

Toward the newly Born!

The simple shepherds from the startlit brooks

Brought visionary looks,

As yet in their astonied ears were rung

The strange sweet angel tongue!

The magi of the East, in sandals worn,

Knelt reverent; sweeping o'er

With long pale beards upon the floor,

And myrrh and heapëd gold

These baby hands were impotent to hold!

So let all earthlies and celestials wait

Upon thy royal state!

Sleep, sleep, my kingly One!

I am not proud - meek angels, put ye on

New meeknesses to hear such utterance rest
On mortal lips,—'I am not proud'—not proud!
Albeit in my flesh God sent His Son,
Albeit over Him my head is bowed,
As others bow before Him, still mine heart
Bows lower than their knees! O centuries
That roll, in vision, your futurities

My grave athwart!

Whose murmurs seem to reach me while I keep

Watch o'er this sleep!

Say of me as the Heavenly said — "Thou art

The blessedest of women!" — blessedest,

Not holiest, not noblest — no high name,

Whose height misplaced may pierce me like a shame,

When I sit meek in heaven! —

For me — for me —

I often wandered forth, more child than maiden,

Among the lonely hills of Galilee,

Whose summits looked heaven-laden!—

Listening to silentness, that seemed to be God's voice, so soft yet strong—so fain to press Upon my heart, as Heaven did on the height,—And waken up its shadows by a light,
And show its vileness by a holiness!

Then I knelt down, as silent as the night,

Too self-renounced for fears;
Raising my small face to the boundless blue
Whose stars did mix and tremble in my tears! —
God heard them falling after — with his dew!

So seeing my corruption, can I see

This Incorruptible now born of me —

This fair new Innocence, no sun did chance

To shine on erst (for Adam was no child)

Created from my nature all defiled —

This mystery, from out mine ignorance —

Nor feel the blindness, stain, corruption, more

Than others do, or I did heretofore?—

Can hands wherein such burden pure have been,
Not open with the cry "unclean, unclean!"

More oft than any else beneath the skies?—

Ah King! ah Christ! ah son!—

The kine, the shepherds, the abasëd wise,
Did all less lowly wait

Than I, upon thy state!—

Sleep, sleep, my kingly One!—

Art Thou a King, then? Come, His universe,

Come, crown me Him a king!—

Pluck rays from all such stars as never fling

Their light where fell a curse,

And make a crowning for this kingly brow!

What is my word?— The stars roll on afar—

The crowning is unmade—

The child-brow keepeth its unchildlike shade—

Sleep, sleep, my crownless One!

Unchildlike shade! — no other babe doth wear
An aspect very sorrowful, as Thou!—
No small babe-smiles my watching eyes have seen
To float like speech the speechless lips between—
No quick short joys of leaping babyhood!

Alas! our earthly good

In heaven thought evil, seems too good for Thee!

And then the drear sharp tongue of prophecy

Doth smite me inly, like a sword — a sword? —

(That smites the Shepherd!) then, I think aloud

The words "despised,"—"rejected,"—every word

Recoiling into darkness as I view

The Loving on my knee!

Bright angels! — move not! — lest ye stir the cloud

Betwixt my soul and His futurity!

I must not die, with mother's work to do—

And could not live—and see!

It is enough to bear This aspect still and fair -This holier in sleep, Than a saint at prayer! This aspect of a child That never sinned or smiled -A sadness most like love, A love than love more deep, Wandering like a smile (Sans its joy meanwhile) Meek and mystical above The gentle sleeping face! Awful is this watching place! Awful what I see from hence — A weakness, which my strength doth part From me, like omnipotence! -A king, without his throne -A God, without his thunder -A child, without the leaping heart

That smiles the lips asunder!

Yea! — a Creator, cast away

On His own world, for me alone

To hold in hands created, crying — Son!

That tear fell not on THEE
Beloved! yet Thou stirrest in thy slumbers!
Thou, stirring not at all the merry numbers
Of tree and bird—

Hast Thou so quickly heard

A tear fall silently? —

Wak'st Thou, O loving One? —

## STANZAS TO BETTINE, THE FRIEND OF GOETHE.

" I have the second sight, Goëthe!"

Her Letters.

Our Goëthe's friend, Bettine,

Hadst thou the second sight —

Upturning worship and delight,

So lovingly and sheenly,

Toward his face, as women will;

The childhood 'neath thine eyelids still?

Before his shrine to doom thee, Using the same child's smile, That heav'n and earth, beheld erewhile

For the first time, won from thee;

Ere star and flower grew dim and dead,

Save at his feet, and o'er his head!

Digging thine heart and throwing

Away its childhood's gold;

That so its woman-depth might hold

His spirit's overflowing!

For surging souls no worlds can bound,

Their channel in the heart have found.

O child, to change appointed,

Thou hadst not second sight!

What eyes the future view aright,

Unless by tears anointed?—

Yea! only tears themselves can show

The burning ones that yet shall flow.

O woman, deeply loving,
Thou hadst not second sight!
The star is very high and bright,
And none can see it moving.
Love looks around, below, above,
Yet all his prophecy is — love.

O changing child and woman,

Thou hadst not second sight!

Or bending down thy forehead white,

The human to the human,

The idol's shadow would have made

Its light to vanish like a shade.

Thy spirit was foreknowing Change to the patriot dead; \*

• The patriot Tyrolese.

N 2

The changing of their battle bed

For meadows ever blowing;—

But ne'er a vision didst thou see

Of death and change to him and thee!

Our Goëthe's friend, Bettine!
What chanceth with thee now?
The funeral stone is on his brow,
The funeral earth between ye!
And, haply, he who left the sun,
For thee hath left a funeral one.

I never shall behold thee —
Thou hast the stranger's face!
Thy smile may keep its ancient place,
And living loves enfold thee;
Yet dost thou change, as others must,
Whose souls have been baptized in dust.

I ween, thy smile is graver —
Paler thy cheek, I ween:
For thou the mystic sight hast seen,
Which maketh quail the braver —
The crowned and loved go naked down,
Without the love, without the crown!

The bird thy childhood's playing
Sent onward o'er the sea,
Thy dove of hope, came back to thee
Without a leaf. Art laying
Its wet cold wing, no sun can dry,
Still in thy bosom, secretly?—

Or hast thou found another;
With plumes thy God hath given,
To leave the wave and meet in heaven
(As brother meeteth brother)

#### STANZAS TO BETTINE, &c.

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Th' eternal Dove who downward flings His glory on its mounting wings?

Such glory rest upon thee,
Our Goëthe's changëd friend!
For earth's, that cometh to an end,
Hath faded and foregone thee—
And thou, the worshipper, hast spread
Thine idol's ashes o'er thine head!

### STANZAS ON THE DEATH

### OF MRS. HEMANS,

WRITTEN IN REFERENCE TO MISS LANDON'S POEM
ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Nor grieve this christall streame so soone did fall
Into the ocean; — since she perfumed all
The banks she past —
HABLEG

HABINGTON.

Thou bay-crowned living One, that o'er
The bay-crowned Dead art bowing!
And o'er the shadeless moveless brow,
The vital shadow throwing —
And o'er the sighless, songless lips,
The wail and music wedding —
Dropping above the tranquil eyes,
The tears not of their shedding! —

Go! take thy music from the dead,
Whose silentness is sweeter!
Reserve thy tears for living brows,
Where all such tears are meeter:
And leave the violets in the grass
To brighten where thou treadest!
No flowers for her! no need of flowers—
Albeit "bring flowers," thou saidest.

Yes! flowers, to crown the "cup and lute"—
Since both are nigh to breaking:
Or flowers, to greet the "bride!" the heart's
Own beating works its aching:
Or flowers, to soothe the "captive's" sight,
From earth's free bosom gathered,
To mind him of his earthly hope,
Then wither as it withered!

But bring not near her solemn corse,

The type of human seeming!

Lay only dust's stern verity

Upon her dust undreaming!

And while the calm perpetual stars

Shall look upon it solely,

Her spherëd soul shall look on them,

With eyes more bright and holy.

Nor mourn, O living One, because

Her part in life was mourning.

Would she have lost the poet's fire,

For anguish of the burning? —

The minstrel harp, for strainëd string?

The tripod, for th' afflated

Woe? or the vision, for those tears

In which it shone dilated?

Perhaps she shuddered, while the world's Cold hand her brow was wreathing: But never wronged that mystic breath
Which breathed in all her breathing;
Which drew from rocky earth and man,
Abstractions high and moving—
Beauty, if not the beautiful—
And love, if not the loving!

Such visionings have paled in sight!

The Saviour she descrieth;

And little recks who wreathed the brow

Which on His bosom lieth!

The whiteness of His innocence

O'er all her garments, flowing,—

There learneth she the sweet "new song,"

She will not mourn in knowing!

Be happy, crowned and living One!

And as thy dust decayeth,

May thine own England say for thee,
What now for Her it sayeth —
'Albeit softly in our ears
Her silver song was ringing,
The foot-fall of her parting soul
Is softer than her singing!'

## MEMORY AND HOPE.

And Hope prophetic, sprang from out the ground!

One, where the flashing of Cherubic sword

Fell downward, sad and broad;

And one, from Eden earth, within the sound

Of the four rivers lapsing pleasantly,

What time the promise after curse was said—

"Thy seed shall bruise his head."

BACK-LOOKING Memory

Memory is very wild, As moonstruck by Cherubic flashings near When she was born! Her deep eyes shine and shone
With light that conquereth sun
And stars to wanner paleness year by year.
With sweetest scents, she mixeth things defiled —
She trampleth down earth's grasses green and sweet,
With her far-wandering feet.

She plucketh many flowers,

Their beauty on her bosom's coldness killing;

She teacheth every melancholy sound

To winds and waters round;

She droppeth tears with seed, where man is tilling

The rugged soil in yet more rugged hours;

She smileth — ah me! in her smile doth go

A mood of deeper woe!

Hope seemed of happier sprite.

Crowned with an Eden wreath she saw not fade,

She went a nodding through the wilderness-

With brow that shone no less

Than sea-bird wings, by storm more frequent made,—

Searching the treeless rock for fruits of light;

Her white feet being armed from stones and cold

By slippers all of gold!

And Memory did her wrong,

And, while she dreamed, her slippers stole away!

But still she wended on with mirth unheeding,

The while her feet were bleeding;
Until she met her on a certain day,
And with her evil eyes did search her long
And cruelly, whereat she sank to ground
In a stark deadly swound.

And so my Hope were slain,

Had it not been that THOU wert standing near,

Oh Thou! who saidest 'live' to spirits lying
In their own blood, and dying!

For Thou her forehead to thine heart did'st rear
And make its silent pulses sing again, —

Pouring a new light o'er her darkened eyne,

With tender tears from Thine!

Therefore my Hope arose

From out her swound, and gazed upon Thy face!

And meeting there that soft subduing look

Which Peter's spirit shook,

Sank downward in a rapture to embrace

Thy pierced hands and feet with kisses close,

And prayed Thee to assist her evermore

To "reach the things before."

Then gavest Thou the smile

Whence angel-wings thrill quick like summer lightning;

Vouchsafing rest beside Thee, where she never
From Love and Faith may sever!
Whereat the Eden crown she saw not whitening,
A time ago, though whitening all the while,
Reddened with life, to hear the voice which talked
To Adam as he walked!

## THE SLEEP.

He giveth His beloved sleep.

Psalm cxxviii ver. 2.

Or all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep —
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this —
"He giveth His belovëd, sleep?"—

What would we give to our beloved?

The hero's heart, to be unmoved—

The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep—

The senate's shout to patriot vows—

The monarch's crown, to light the brows?—

"He giveth His beloved, sleep."

What do we give to our beloved?

A little faith, all undisproved —

A little dust, to overweep —

And bitter memories, to make

The whole earth blasted for our sake!

"He giveth His belovëd, sleep."

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say,
But have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber, when
"He giveth His beloved, sleep."

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delvëd gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God makes a silence through you all,
And giveth His belovëd, sleep!

His dews drop mutely on the hill;
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men toil and reap!
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
"He giveth His beloved, sleep."

Yea! men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man,
In such a rest his heart to keep;
But angels say—and through the word
I ween their blessëd smile is heard—
"He giveth His belovëd, sleep!"

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the jugglers leap, —
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on *His* love repose,
Who giveth His beloved, sleep!

And, friends! — dear friends! — when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep —
Let one, most loving of you all,
Say, "Not a tear must o'er her fall —
"He giveth His belovëd, sleep!"

#### MAN'AND NATURE.

\_\_\_\_\_ against all others' use \_\_\_ Surrey.

A sad man on a summer day,

Did look upon the earth, and say ——

"Shining cloud, the hill-top folding;
Kingly hills, the valleys holding;
Valleys, with the streams among you;
Streams, with trees that grow along you;
Trees, with many birds and blossoms;
Birds, with music-trembling bosoms;
Blossoms, casting dews that wreathe you,
To your fellow flowers beneath you;

Flowers, that bring down stars to earth;
Earth, that shakest to the mirth
Of the merry Titan ocean,
All his shining hair in motion!
Why am I thus the only one
Who can be dark beneath the sun?"—

What time the summer day was past,

He looked to heaven, and smiled at last!—

Self-answered so——

"Because, O cloud,
Pressing with thy crumpled shroud
Heavily on mountain top —
Hills, that almost seem to drop,
Stricken with a misty death,
To the valleys underneath;
Valleys, sighing with the torrent;
Waters, streaked with branches horrent;

Branchless trees, that shake your head
Wildly o'er your blossoms spread
Where the common flowers are found —
Flowers, with foreheads to the ground; —
Ground, that shriekest while the sea
With his iron smiteth thee —
I am, besides, the only one
Who can be bright without the sun!"

#### THE SEA-SIDE WALK.

If these doe so, can I have feeling lesse?

Britunnia's Pastorals.

We walked by the sea,

After a day which perished silently

Of its own glory — like the Princess weird

Who, combating the Genius, scorched and seared —

Uttered with burning breath, "Ho! victory!"

And sank adown, an heap of ashes pale.

So runs the Arab tale!

The sky above us showed An universal and unmoving cloud, Athwart the which, yon cliffs did let us see
Only the outline of their majesty;
As master-minds, when gazed at by the crowd!
And, shining with a gloominess, the water
Swang as the moon had taught her.

Nor moon, nor stars were out.

They did not dare to tread so soon about,

Though trembling, in the footsteps of the sun.

The light was neither night's nor day's, but one

Which, life-like, had a beauty in its doubt;

And silence's impassioned breathings round

Seemed wandering into sound!

O solemn-beating heart

Of Nature! I have knowledge that thou art

Bound unto man's by cords he cannot sever —

And, what time they are slackened by him ever,

So to attest his own supernal part,

Still runneth thy vibration fast and strong, The slackened cord along.

For though we never spoke

Of water colourless, and shaded rock,—

Dark wave and stone, unconsciously, were fused
Into the plaintive speaking that we used,

Of absent friends and memories unforsook:

And, had we seen each other's face, we had

Seen haply, each was sad!

## THE SEA-MEW.

And me they found (O wofull tale to tell)

Whose harmlesse hart perceivde not this deceit.

Gascoigne's Steele Glas.

How joyously the young sea-mew
Lay dreaming on the waters blue,
Whereon our little bark had thrown
A forward shade — the only one —
(But shadows aye will man pursue!)

Familiar with the waves, and free,
As if their own white foam were he:
His heart upon the heart of ocean,
Learning all its mystic motion,
And throbbing to the throbbing sea!

And such a brightness in his eye,
As if the ocean and the sky,
Within him had lit up and nurst
A soul God gave him not at first,
To comprehend their majesty.

We were not cruel, yet did sunder
His white wing from the blue waves under,
And bound it — while his fearless eyes
Shone up to ours in calm surprise,
As deeming us some ocean wonder!

We bore our ocean bird unto

A grassy place where he might view

The flowers bending to the bees,

The waving of the tall green trees,

The falling of the silver dew.

But flowers of earth were pale to him Who had seen the rainbow fishes swim; And when earth's dew around him lay, He thought of ocean's wingëd spray, And his eye waxëd sad and dim.

The green trees round him only made

A prison, with their darksome shade:

And drooped his wing, and mourned he

For his own boundless glittering sea—

Albeit he knew not they could fade!

Then One her gladsome face did bring,
Her gentle voice's murmuring,
In ocean's stead his heart to move,
And teach him what was human love —
He thought it a strange, mournful thing!

He lay down in his grief to die,
(First looking to the sea-like sky,
That hath no waves!) because, alas!
Our human touch did on him pass,
And with our touch, our agony.

## THE LITTLE FRIEND.

WRITTEN IN THE BOOK WHICH SHE MADE AND SENT TO ME.

—το δ' ηδη εξ οφθαλμων απεληλυθεν.

MARCUS ANTONINUS.

The book thou givest, dear as such,

Shall bear thy dearer name;

And many a word the leaves shall touch,

For thee who form'dst the same!

And on them, many a thought shall grow
'Neath memory's rain and sun,

Of thee, glad child, who dost not know

That thought and pain are one!

Yes! thoughts of thee, who satest oft,

A while since, at my side —

So wild to tame, — to move so soft,

So very hard to chide:

The childish vision at thine heart,

The lesson on the knee;

The wandering looks which would depart

Like gulls, across the sea!

The laughter, which no half-belief
In wrath could all suppress;
The falling tears, which looked like grief,
And were but gentleness:
The fancies sent, for bliss, abroad,
As Eden's were not done—
Mistaking still the cherub's sword
For shining of the sun!

The sportive speech with wisdom in't —

The question strange and bold —

The childish fingers in the print
Of God's creative hold:
The praying words in whispers said,
The sin with sobs confest;
The leaning of the young meek head
Upon the Saviour's breast!

The gentle consciousness of praise

With hues that went and came;

The brighter blush, a word could raise,

Were that — a father's name!

The shadow on thy smile for each

That on his face could fall!

So quick hath love been, thee to teach,

What soon it teacheth all.

Sit still as erst beside his feet!.

The future days are dim,—

But those will seem to thee most sweet,

Which keep thee nearest him!

Sit at his feet in quiet mirth,

And let him see arise

A clearer sun and greener earth

Within thy loving eyes!

Ah loving eyes! that used to lift
Your childhood to my face —
That leave a memory on the gift
I look on in your place —
May bright-eyed hosts your guardians be
From all but thankful tears, —
While, brightly as ye turned on me,
Ye meet th' advancing years!

# MY DOVES.

O Weisheit! Du red'st wie eine Taube! Gоётнь.

My little doves have left a nest
Upon an Indian tree,
Whose leaves fantastic take their rest
Or motion from the sea:
For, ever there, the sea-winds go
With sunlit paces, to and fro.

The tropic flowers looked up to it,

The tropic stars looked down:

And there my little doves did sit,

With feathers softly brown,

And glittering eyes that showed their right

To general Nature's deep delight.

And God them taught, at every close
Of water far, and wind
And lifted leaf, to interpose
Their chanting voices kind;
Interpreting that love must be
The meaning of the earth and sea.

Fit ministers! Of living loves,

Their's hath the calmest sound —

Their living voice the likest moves

To lifeless noises round —

In such sweet monotone as clings

To music of insensate things! —

My little doves were ta'en away

From that glad nest of theirs,

Across an ocean foaming aye,

And tempest-clouded airs.

My little doves! — who lately knew

The sky and wave, by warmth and blue!

And now within the city prison,
In mist and chillness pent,
With sudden upward look they listen
For sounds of past content —
For lapse of water, swell of breeze,
Or nut-fruit falling from the trees!

The stir without the glow of passion —
The triumph of the mart —
The gold and silver's dreary clashing
With man's metallic heart —

The wheelëd pomp, the pauper tread — These only sounds are heard instead.

Yet still, as on my human hand

Their fearless heads they lean,

And almost seem to understand

What human musings mean —

(With such a plaintive gaze their eyne

Are fastened upwardly to mine!)

Their chant is soft as on the nest,

Beneath the sunny sky:

For love that stirred it in their breast,

Remains undyingly,

And 'neath the city's shade, can keep

The well of music clear and deep.

And love that keeps the music, fills

With pastoral memories!

All echoings from out the hills,

All droppings from the skies,

All flowings from the wave and wind,

Remembered in their chant I find.

So teach ye me the wisest part,

My little doves! to move

Along the city ways, with heart

Assured by holy love,

And vocal with such songs as own

A fountain to the world unknown.

T'was hard to sing by Babel's stream —
More hard, in Babel's street!

But if the soulless creatures deem
Their music not unmeet

For sunless walls — let us begin,

Who wear immortal wings, within!

To me, fair memories belong

Of scenes that erst did bless;

For no regret — but present song,

And lasting thankfulness —

And very soon to break away,

Like types, in purer things than they!

I will have hopes that cannot fade,
For flowers the valley yields —
I will have humble thoughts, instead
Of silent, dewy fields!
My spirit and my God shall be
My sea-ward hill, my boundless sea!

### TO MISS MITFORD

IN HER GARDEN.

And o'er her heade that was bryght and shene,
She had a garlande of the laurell grene.

Pastime of Plesure.

What time I lay these rhymes anear thy feet,
Benignant friend! I will not proudly say,
As better poets use, 'These flowers I lay;'
Because I would not wrong thy blossoms sweet,
By spoiling so their name. Yet think it meet—
Thou overleaning them this springtime day,
With heart as open to love as theirs to dew—

That even my verse like them, if nature-true,
Low-rooted may attain some heavenly heat!
Ah, friend! without that word, it must seem good
That women in their songs be mindful oft
Of thee, whose genius walketh mild and soft
As Una's lion, chainless though subdued,\*
Beside thy purity of womanhood!

From her fair eyes he tooke commandëment,
 And ever from her looks conceived her intent.
 Faery Queen.

#### THE STUDENT.

Τι ουν τουτο προς σε; και ουδεν λεγω οτι προς τον τεθνηκοτα, αλλα προς τον ζωντα, τι  $\dot{o}$  επαινος; —

MARCUS ANTONINUS.

"My midnight lamp is weary as my soul,
And being unimmortal, has gone out.
And now alone you moony lamp of heaven,
Which God lit and not man, illuminates
These volumes, others wrote in weariness
As I have read them; and this cheek and brow,
Whose paleness, burnëd in with heats of thought,

Would make an angel smile to see how ill

Clay thrust from Paradise consorts with mind —

If angels could, like men, smile bitterly.

"Yet, must my brow be paler! I have vowed
To clip it with the crown which cannot fade,
When it is faded. Not in vain ye cry,
O glorious voices that survive the tongues
From whence was drawn your separate sovereignty—
For I would reign beside you! I would melt
The golden treasures of my health and life
Into that name! My lips are vowed apart
From cheerful words; mine ears, from pleasant sounds;

Mine eyes, from sights God made so beautiful,—
My feet, from wanderings under shady trees;
Mine hands, from clasping of dear-loving friends —
My very heart, from feelings which move soft!
Vowed am I from the day's delightsomeness,

And dreams of night! and when the house is dumb
In sleep, which is the pause 'twixt life and life,
I live and waken thus; and pluck away
Slumber's sleek poppies from my painëd lids—
Goading my mind with thongs wrought by herself,
To toil and struggle along this mountain-path
Which hath no mountain-airs; until she sweat
Like Adam's brow, and gasp, and rend away
In agony, her garment of the flesh!"

And so his midnight lamp was lit anew,

And burned till morning. But his lamp of life

Till morning burned not! He was found embraced

Close, cold, and stiff, by Death's compelling sleep;

His breast and brow supported on a page

Charàctered over with a praise of fame,

Of its divineness and beatitude —

Words which had often caused that heart to throb,

That cheek to burn; though silent lay they now,

Without a single beating in the pulse, And all the fever gone!

I saw a bay

Spring verdant from a newly fashioned grave.

The grass upon the grave was verdanter,

That being watered by the eyes of One

Who bore not to look up toward the tree!

Others looked on it — some, with passing glance,

Because the light wind stirrëd in its leaves;

And some, with sudden lighting of the soul

In admiration's ecstasy! — Ay! some

Did wag their heads like oracles, and say,

"'Tis very well!"— but none rememberëd

The heart which housed the root, except that One

Whose sight was lost in weeping!

Is it thus,

Ambition, idol of the intellect?

Shall we drink aconite, alone to use

Thy golden bowl? and sleep ourselves to death—

To dream thy visions about life? O Power

That art a very feebleness!—before

Thy clayey feet we bend our knees of clay,

And round thy senseless brow bind diadems

With paralytic hands, and shout 'a god,'

With voices mortal-hoarse! Who can discern

Th' infirmities they share in? Being blind,

We cannot see thy blindness: being weak,

We cannot feel thy weakness: being low,

We cannot mete thy baseness: being unwise,

We cannot understand thine idiocy!

## THE EXILE'S RETURN.

Is there any discontent, Worse than this my banishment?

WITHER.

When from thee I did part away,
And from my land for years,
I did not think to come again
With those same parting tears.
I come again to hill and lea—
Weeping for thee!

Thine hand was claspëd warm in mine
When I was standing last
Upon the shore of cheerful green,
Our vessel neareth fast.

I shall be there—no longer we—
No more with thee!

Had I beheld thee still and dead,

I might more clearly know,

How heart of thine could turn as cold

As hearts by nature so —

How change could touch the falsehood-free

And changeless thee!

But now thy last-seen tender looks

Within my soul remain;

And it is hard to think that they

Will shine no more again—

P 2

That I shall vainly wait — ah me!

No word from thee!

I could not bear to look upon

That mound of funeral clay,

Where one sweet voice is silentness

And one fair brow decay, —

Where all thy mortal I might see, —

But never thee!

For thou art where the loving are,
Whose parting pain is o'er!
And I who love and weep alone,
Where thou wilt weep no more,
Weep bitterly, not selfishly,
For me, not thee!

I know that thou canst never know
The anguish which I feel;
Because upon no brows in Heaven,
An earthly grief may steal—
And grief thou knewest mine, would be
Still shared by thee!

# A SONG AGAINST SINGING.

TO MY DEAR LITTLE COUSIN

ELIZABETH JANE H----

Sing mirthful swaines; but let me sigh alone.

Browne.

They bid me sing to thee,

Thou golden-haired and silver-voicëd child,

With lips, by no worse sigh than sleep's, defiled;

With eyes, unknowing how tears dim the sight;

With feet all trembling at the new delight,

Treaders of earth to be!

Ah no! the lark may bring

A song to thee from out the morning cloud;

The merry river, from its lilies bowed;

The brisk rain, from the trees; the lucky wind,

That half doth make its music, half doth find!

But I—I may not sing!

How could I think it right,

Newcomer on our earth, as, Sweet, thou art,

To bring a verse from out an human heart

So heavy with accumulated tears;

And cross with such amount of weary years,

Thy day-sum of delight?

E'en if the verse were said;
Thou, who wouldst clap thy tiny hands to hear
The wind or rain, gay bird or river clear,
Wouldst, at that sound of sad humanities,
Upturn thy bright uncomprehending eyes
And bid me play instead.

Therefore no song of mine!

But prayer in place of singing! prayer that would

Commend thee to the new-creating God,

Whose gift is childhood's heart, without its stain

Of weakness, ignorance, and changings vain —

That gift of God be thine!

So wilt thou aye be young,

In lovelier childhood than thy shining brow

And pretty winning accents make thee now!

Yea! sweeter than this scarce articulate sound

(How sweet!) of "father" "mother," shall be found

The Abba on thy tongue!

And so, as years shall chase

Each other's shadows, thou wilt less resemble

Thy fellows of the earth who toil and tremble,

Than him thou seest not, thine angel bold,

Yet meek, whose ever-lifted eyes behold

The Ever-loving's face!

## STANZAS.

I MAY sing; but minstrel's singing
Ever ceaseth with his playing.
I may smile; but time is bringing
Thoughts for smiles to wear away in.
I may view thee, mutely loving;
But shall view thee so in dying!
I may sigh; but life's removing,
And with breathing endeth sighing!
Be it so!

When no song of mine comes near thee, Will its memory fail to soften? When no smile of mine can cheer thee, Will thy smile be used as often? When my looks the darkness boundeth,
Will thine own be lighted after?
When my sigh no longer soundeth,
Wilt thou list another's laughter?
Be it so!

# THE YOUNG QUEEN.

This awful responsibility is imposed upon me so suddenly and at so early a period of my life, that I should feel myself utterly oppressed by the burden, were I not sustained by the hope that Divine Providence, which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it.

The Queen's Declaration in Council.

The shroud is yet unspread

To wrap our crownëd dead;

His soul hath scarcely hearkened for the thrilling word of doom;

And Death that makes serene

Ev'n brows where crowns have been,

Hath scarcely time to meeten his, for silence of the tomb.



St. Paul's king-dirging note

The city's heart hath smote —

The city's heart is struck with thought more solemn than the tone!

A shadow sweeps apace Before the nation's face,

Confusing in a shapeless blot, the sepulchre and throne.

The palace sounds with wail —
The courtly dames are pale —

A widow o'er the purple bows, and weeps its splendour dim:

And we who hold the boon,

A king for freedom won,

Do feel eternity rise up between our thanks and him.

And while all things express
All glory's nothingness,

A royal maiden treadeth firm where *that* departed trod!

The deathly scented crown

Weighs her shining ringlets down;

But calm she lifts her trusting face, and calleth upon God.

Her thoughts are deep within her:

No outward pageants win her

From memories that in her soul are rolling wave on wave —

Her palace walls enring

The dust that was a king -

And very cold beneath her feet, she feels her father's grave.

And One, as fair as she,

Can scarce forgotten be, -

Who clasped a little infant dead, for all a kingdom's worth! The mournëd, blessëd One, Who views Jehovah's throne,

Aye smiling to the angels, that she lost a throne on earth.

Perhaps our youthful Queen Remembers what has been —

Her childhood's rest by loving heart, and sport on grassy sod —

Alas! can others wear

A mother's heart for her?

But calm she lifts her trusting face, and calleth upon God.

Yea! call on God, thou maiden
Of spirit nobly laden,

And leave such happy days behind, for happymaking years!

A nation looks to thee

For stedfast sympathy:

Make room within thy bright clear eyes, for all its gathered tears.

And so the grateful isles
Shall give thee back their smiles,

And as thy mother joys in thee, in them shalt thou rejoice;

Rejoice to meekly bow

A somewhat paler brow,

While the King of Kings shall bless thee by the British people's voice!

## VICTORIA'S TEARS.

Hark! the reiterated clangour sounds!

Now murmurs, like the sea or like the storm,

Or like the flames on forests, move and mount

From rank to rank, and loud and louder roll,

Till all the people is one vast applause.

LANDOR'S Gebir.

"O MAIDEN! heir of kings!

A king has left his place!

The majesty of Death has swept

All other from his face!

And thou upon thy mother's breast,

No longer lean adown,

But take the glory for the rest,

And rule the land that loves thee best!"

She heard and wept —

She wept, to wear a crown!

They decked her courtly halls;
They reined her hundred steeds;
They shouted at her palace gate,
"A noble Queen succeeds!"
Her name has stirred the mountain's sleep,
Her praise has filled the town!
And mourners God had stricken deep,
Looked hearkening up, and did not weep.
Alone she wept,
Who wept, to wear a crown!

She saw no purples shine, For tears had dimmed her eyes; She only knew her childhood's flowers

Were happier pageantries!

And while her heralds played the part,

For million shouts to drown—

"God save the Queen" from hill to mart,—

She heard through all her beating heart,

And turned and wept — She wept, to wear a crown!

God save thee, weeping Queen!
Thou shalt be well beloved!
The tyrant's sceptre cannot move,
As those pure tears have moved!
The nature in thine eyes we see,
That tyrants cannot own—
The love that guardeth liberties!
Strange blessing on the nation lies,
Whose Sovereign wept—
Yea! wept, to wear its crown!

God bless thee, weeping Queen,
With blessing more divine!

And fill with happier love than earth's,
That tender heart of thine!

That when the thrones of earth shall be
As low as graves brought down;

A piercëd hand may give to thee

The crown which angels shout to see!

Thou wilt not weep,

To wear that heavenly crown!

## VANITIES.

From fading things, fond men, lift your desire.

DRUMMOND.

COULD ye be very blest in hearkening
Youth's often danced-to melodies —
Hearing it piped, the midnight darkening
Doth come to show the starry skies, —
To freshen garden-flowers, the rain?
It is in vain, it is in vain!

Could ye be very blest in urging

A captive nation's strength to thunder

Out into foam, and with its surging

The Xerxean fetters break asunder?

The storm is cruel as the chain!

It is in vain, it is in vain!

Could ye be very blest in paling
Your brows with studious nights and days,
When like your lamps your life is failing,
And sighs, not breath, are wrought from praise?
Your tombs, not ye, that praise retain—
It is in vain, it is in vain!

Yea! but ye could be very blest,

If some ye nearest love were nearest!

Must they not love when loved best?

Must ye not happiest love when dearest?

Alas!—how hard to feel again,

It is in vain, it is in vain!

For those ye love are not unsighing,—
They are unchanging least of all:
And ye the loved—ah! no denying,
Will leave your lips beneath the pall,
When passioned ones have o'er it sain—
'It is in vain, it is in vain!'

## BEREAVEMENT.

When some Belovëds, 'neath whose eyelids lay
The sweet lights of my childhood, one by one
Did leave me dark before the natural sun,
And I astonied fell, and could not pray;
A thought within me to myself did say,
"Is God less God, that thou art mortal-sad?
Rise, worship, bless Him! in this sackcloth clad
As in that purple!"—But I answer, nay!
What child his filial heart in words conveys,
If him for very good his father choose
To smite? What can he, but with sobbing breath
Embrace th' unwilling hand which chasteneth?—
And my dear Father, thinking fit to bruise,
Discerns in silent tears, both prayer and praise.

#### CONSOLATION.

All are not taken! there are left behind

Living Beloveds, tender looks to bring,

And make the daylight still a blessed thing,

And tender voices, to make soft the wind.

But if it were not so — if I could find

No love in all the world to answer me,

Nor any pathway but rang hollowly,

Where "dust to dust" the love from life disjoined —

And if with parched lips, as in a dearth

Of water-springs the very deserts claim,

I uttered to those sepulchres unmoving

The bitter cry, "Where are ye, O my loving!"

I know a Voice would sound "Daughter, I AM!

Can I suffice for Heaven, and not for earth?"

## A SUPPLICATION FOR LOVE.

## HYMN I.

The Lord Jesus, although gone to the Father, and we see him no more, is still present with His Church; and in His heavenly glory expends upon her as intense a love, as in the agony of the garden, and the crucifixion of the tree. Those eyes that wept, still gaze upon her.—— Recalled words of an extempore Discourse, preached at Sidmouth, 1833.

God, named Love, whose fount thou art,

Thy crownless Church before thee stands,

With too much hating in her heart,

And too much striving in her hands!

O loving Lord! O slain for love!

Thy blood upon thy garments came —

Inwrap their folds our brows above,

Before we tell Thee all our shame!

'Love as I loved you,' was the sound
That on thy lips expiring sate!
Sweet words, in bitter strivings drowned!
We hated as the worldly hate.

The spear that pierced for love thy side,

We dared for wrathful use to crave;

And with our cruel noise denied

Its silence to thy blood-red grave!

Ah blood! that speaketh more of love

Than Abel's! — could we speak like Cain,
And grieve and scare that holy Dove,

The parting love-gift of the Slain?

Yet Lord, thy wrongëd love fulfil!

Thy Church, though fallen, before Thee stands —
Behold, the voice is Jacob's still,

Albeit the hands are Esau's hands!

Hast Thou no tears, like those besprent
Upon Thy Zion's ancient part?
No moving looks, like those which sent
Their softness through a traitor's heart?

No touching tale of anguish dear;

Whereby like children we may creep,

All trembling, to each other near,

And view each other's face, and weep?

Oh, move us — Thou hast power to move —
One in the one Beloved to be!
Teach us the heights and depths of love —
Give Thine — that we may love like Thee!

Q 2

## THE MEDIATOR.

#### HYMN II.

As the greatest of all sacrifices was required, we may be assured that no other would have sufficed.

Boyn's Essay on the Atonement.

How high Thou art! our songs can own

No music Thou couldst stoop to hear!

But still the Son's expiring groan

Is vocal in the Father's ear.

How pure Thou art! our hands are dyed

With curses, red with murder's hue—

But HE hath stretched HIS hands to hide

The sins that pierced them from thy view.

How strong Thou art! we tremble lest

The thunders of thine arm be moved—
But HE is lying on thy breast,

And thou must clasp thy best Beloved!

How kind Thou art! Thou didst not choose

To joy in Him for ever so;

But that embrace thou wilt not lose

For vengeance, didst for love forego!

High God, and pure, and strong, and kind!

The low, the foul, the feeble, spare!

Thy brightness in H1s face we find —

Behold our darkness only there!

# THE WEEPING SAVIOUR.

#### HYMN III.

Whether His countenance can thee affright,
Tears in His eyes quench the amazing light.
Donne.

When Jesus' friend had ceased to be,

Still Jesus' heart its friendship kept —

"Where have ye laid him?" — "Come and see!"

But ere His eyes could see, they wept.

Lord! not in sepulchres alone,

Corruption's worm is rank and free;

The shroud of death our bosoms own —

The shades of sorrow! Come, and see!

Come, Lord! God's image cannot shine

Where sin's funereal darkness lowers—

Come! turn those weeping eyes of thine

Upon these sinning souls of ours!

And let those eyes, with shepherd care,

Their moving watch above us keep;

Till love the strength of sorrow wear,

And as Thou weepedst, we may weep!

For surely we may weep to know,

So dark and deep our spirit's stain;

That had Thy blood refused to flow,

Thy very tears had flowed in vain.

# THE MEASURE.

#### HYMN IV.

- ' He comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure.' (שליש). Isaiah xl.
- ' Thou givest them tears to drink in a measure.' (שליש).• Psalm lxxx.

Without measure, we worthe the sadnesse! —
HAWES,

God, the Creator, with a pulseless hand
Of unoriginated power, hath weighed
The dust of earth and tears of man, in one
Measure and by one weight;
—
So saith His holy book.

 I believe that the word occurs in no other part of the Hebrew Scriptures. Shall we, then, who have issued from the dust,
And there return; shall we, who toil for dust,
And wrap our winnings in this dusty life,
Say, "No more tears, Lord God!

Say, "No more tears, Lord God!

The measure runneth o'er?"

Oh, holder of the balance, laughest Thou?

Nay, Lord! be gentler to our foolishness,

For His sake who assumed our dust, and turns

On thee pathetic eyes,

Still moistened with our tears!

And teach us, O our Father, while we weep,
To look all patiently on earth, and learn —
Waiting in that meek gesture, till at last
These tearful eyes be filled
With the dry dust of death!

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#### COWPER'S GRAVE.

I will invite thee, from thy envious herse
To rise, and 'bout the world thy beams to spread,
That we may see there's brightnesse in the dead.

HABINGTON.

It is a place where poets crowned

May feel the heart's decaying —

It is a place where happy saints

May weep amid their praying —

Yet let the grief and humbleness,

As low as silence, languish;

Earth surely now may give her calm

To whom she gave her anguish.

O poets! from a maniac's tongue
Was poured the deathless singing!
O Christians! at your cross of hope
A hopeless hand was clinging!
O men! this man, in brotherhood,
Your weary paths beguiling,
Groaned inly while he taught you peace,
And died while ye were smiling!

And now, what time ye all may read

Through dimming tears his story —

How discord on the music fell,

And darkness on the glory —

And how, when one by one, sweet sounds

And wandering lights departed,

He wore no less a loving face,

Because so broken-hearted —

He shall be strong to sanctify

The poet's high vocation,

And bow the meekest Christian down

In meeker adoration:

Nor ever shall he be in praise,

By wise or good forsaken;

Named softly, as the household name

Of one whom God hath taken!

With sadness that is calm, not gloom,

I learn to think upon him;

With meekness that is gratefulness,

On God whose heaven hath won him—

Who suffered once the madness-cloud,

Toward His love to blind him;

But gently led the blind along

Where breath and bird could find him;

And wrought within his shattered brain,
Such quick poetic senses,
As hills have language for, and stars,
Harmonious influences!
The pulse of dew upon the grass,
His own did calmly number;
And silent shadow from the trees
Fell o'er him like a slumber.

The very world, by God's constraint,
From falsehood's chill removing,
Its women and its men became
Beside him, true and loving!—
And timid hares were drawn from woods
To share his home-caresses,
Uplooking to his human eyes
With sylvan tendernesses.

But while, in blindness he remained
Unconscious of the guiding,
And things provided came without
The sweet sense of providing,
He testified this solemn truth,
Though phrenzy desolated —
Nor man, nor nature satisfy,
When only God created!

Like a sick child that knoweth not

His mother while she blesses,

And droppeth on his burning brow

The coolness of her kisses;

That turns his fevered eyes around—

"My mother! where's my mother?"—

As if such tender words and looks

Could come from any other!

The fever gone, with leaps of heart

He sees her bending o'er him;

Her face all pale from watchful love,

Th' unweary love she bore him!

Thus, woke the poet from the dream

His life's long fever gave him,

Beneath these deep pathetic eyes

Which closed in death, to save him!

Thus! oh, not thus! no type of earth
Could image that awaking,
Wherein he scarcely heard the chant
Of seraphs, round him breaking —
Or felt the new immortal throb
Of soul from body parted;
But felt those eyes alone, and knew
"My Saviour! not deserted!"

Deserted! who hath dreamt that when
The cross in darkness rested,
Upon the Victim's hidden face
No love was manifested?
What frantic hands outstretched have e'er
Th' atoning drops averted—
What tears have washed them from the soul—
That one should be deserted?

Deserted! God could separate

From His own essence rather:

And Adam's sins have swept between

The righteous Son and Father—

Yea! once, Immanuel's orphaned cry,

His universe hath shaken—

It went up single, echoless,

"My God, I am forsaken!"

It went up from the Holy's lips
Amid his lost creation,
That of the lost, no son should use
Those words of desolation;
That earth's worst phrenzies, marring hope,
Should mar not hope's fruition;
And I, on Cowper's grave, should see
His rapture, in a vision!

## THE WEAKEST THING.

Weaker I am, woe's me! ——
Donne.

Which is the weakest thing of all
Mine heart can ponder?
The sun, a little cloud can pall
With darkness yonder?
The cloud, a little wind can move
Where'er it listeth?
The wind, a leaf which hangs above,
Though sere, resisteth?

What time that yellow leaf was green,
My days were gladder —

Now on its branch each summer-sheen
May find me sadder!

Ah me! a leaf with sighs can wring
My lips asunder —

Then is mine heart the weakest thing
Itself can ponder!

Yet, Heart, when sun and cloud are pined,
And drop together;
And at a blast which is not wind,
The forests wither;
Thou, from the darkening deathly curse,
To glory breakest—
The Strongest of the universe
Guarding the weakest!

## THE NAME.

Which from THEIR lips seemed a caress,

Miss Mittorno's Dramatic Scenes.

I HAVE a name, a little name,
Uncadenced for the ear;
Unhonored by ancestral claim,
Unsanctified by prayer and psalm,
The solemn font anear.

It never did to pages wove
For gay romaunt, belong:
It never dedicate did move
As 'Sacharissa,' unto love —
'Orinda,' unto song.

Though I write books, it will be read

Upon the leaves of none;

And afterward, when I am dead,

Will ne'er be graved for sight or tread,

Across my funeral stone.

Whoever chanceth it to call,

May chance your smile to win;

Nay, do not smile! mine eyelids fall

Over mine eyes, and feel withal

The sudden tears within!

Is there a leaf that greenly grows

Where summer meadows bloom,
But gathereth the winter snows,
And changeth to the hue of those,
If lasting till they come?

Is there a word, or jest, or game, But time encrusteth round With sad associate thoughts the same?

And so to me my very name

Assumes a mournful sound.

My brother gave that name to me
When we were children twain;
When names acquired baptismally
Were hard to utter, as to see
That life had any pain.

No shade was on us then, save one
Of chesnuts from the hill —
And through the word our laugh did run
As part thereof! The mirth being done,
He calls me by it still!

Nay, do not smile! I hear in it What none of you can hear! The talk upon the willow seat,

The bird and wind that did repeat

Around, our human cheer!

I hear the birthday's noisy bliss,

My sisters' woodland glee —

My father's praise I did not miss,

What time he stoopëd down to kiss

The poet at his knee —

And voices — which to name me, aye

Most tender tones were keeping!

To some, I never more can say

An answer, till God wipes away

In heaven, these drops of weeping!

My name to me a sadness wears —

No murmurs cross my mind —

Now God be thanked for these thick tears,
Which show, of those departed years,
Sweet memories left behind!

Now God be thanked for years enwrought
With love which softens yet!

Now God be thanked for every thought
Which is so tender, it hath caught
Earth's guerdon of regret!

Earth may embitter, not remove,

The love divinely given:

And e'en that mortal grief shall prove.

The immortality of love,

And lead us nearer Heaven!

THE END.

LONDON: PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY, Dorset Street, Fleet Street.



